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Patchwork history : tracing artworlds in the African diaspora

Essay on interpretations of visual art in societies of the African diaspora. Author relates this to recent shifts in anthropology and art history/criticism toward an increasing combining of art and anthropology and integration of art with social and cultural developments, and the impact of these shifts on Afro-American studies. To exemplify this, she focuses on clothing (among Maroons in the Guianas), quilts, and gallery art. She emphasizes the role of developments in America in these fabrics, apart from just the African origins.

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SALLY PRICE

PATCHWORK HISTORY:
TRACING ARTWORLDS IN THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

This paper considers interpretations of visual art in societies of the African diaspora, setting them within the context of recent theoretical shifts in the disciplines of anthropology and art history/criticism. I will be arguing for the relevance to Afro-American studies of these broader disciplinary changes, which have fundamentally reoriented scholarship on arts that, for the most part, fall outside of what Joseph Alsop (1982) has dubbed "The Great Traditions." Toward that end, I begin with a general assessment of these theoretical shifts (*Part 1: Anthropology and Art History Shake Hands*) before moving into an exploration of their impact on Afro-American studies (*Part 2: Mapping the African-American Artworld*). I then adopt a still narrower focus, looking at historical interpretations of what we might (or might not) consider a single medium – the stitched-together fabrics on clothing (among Maroons), quilts (in the southern United States), and gallery art (in work by such artists as Faith Ringgold, Emma Amos, and Joyce Scott) – in order to assess scholars' readings of the relationship between these forms and the edge-sewn textile traditions of Africa and the uses they have made of those readings in drawing broader conclusions about the culture history of the African diaspora (*Part 3: Seaming Connections*). Finally, I offer some thoughts on the conceptual and methodological approaches that might be most promising for future studies of artworlds in the African diaspora as a whole (*Part 4: Zooming In, Zooming Out*).

ANTHROPOLOGY AND ART HISTORY SHAKE HANDS

Looking first at shifts in the field of "fine arts" over the past two decades or so, I would argue that the increased attention to art *worlds* (or, in the writing of Arthur C. Danto [1964] and others, "artworlds") ranks at the very top of the list. The complex workings – social, cultural, economic, political – that give

structure, texture, and (contested or uncontested) meaning to the more traditional matters of objects and their collective history have been moving steadily into greater prominence. Both scholarly and popular writing on art has been engaging in energetic scrutiny of museum ethics, curatorial strategies, auction politics, market dynamics, collecting agendas, and the complex hierarchy of connoisseurship and authority. Artworks once viewed as visual entities set into more or less elaborate wooden borders are now being framed in a completely different sense, as contextualized productions undergoing contextualized readings. Setting art objects, artists' biographies, and the evolution of stylistic sequences more forcefully in the context of perceptions conditioned by social and cultural factors brings them closer to long-standing anthropological concerns and interests, and acts to erode the lingering temptation (stronger for some commentators than others) to view art history as the pristine, apolitical study of aesthetic forms. And sacred territories of art historical scholarship, where original works authenticated by erudite connoisseurship once held pride of place, are being quietly invaded by a growing interest in copies, fakes, appropriations, and derivative forms.

Approaches to "ethnographic" art have also undergone what we might consider sea changes over the same period. Especially pivotal has been a diminished focus on cultural isolates; just as art history/criticism has been widening its aperture on works of art, the study of societies and cultures is being set in broader fields of vision, with important repercussions for the anthropological study of art. While scholars once strained to discern the stylistic essences of particular arts in particular cultures, they are now directing their gaze more frequently toward the doorways where artistic and aesthetic ideas jostle each other in their passage from one cultural setting to the next. While the emphasis was once on abstracting back from an overlay of modernity to discover uncorrupted artistic traditions (Franz Boas holding up a blanket to block out the two-story houses behind the Kwakiutl natives he was filming for the anthropological record ...¹), modernization now lies at the heart of the enterprise, providing a springboard for explorations of cultural creativity and self-affirmation. While the site of artistic production was once located in lineages of convention within bounded communities, it now spreads into the global arena, pulling in players from every corner of the world, from every kind of society, and from every chamber of the artworld's vast honeycomb.

Not surprisingly, these shifts are being accompanied by a marked, if gradual, rapprochement among the various sectors of the popular and scholarly artworld. In museums, the most visible evidence has been an explosion, over the past decade or two, of exhibitions integrating anthropological and art historical issues and scholarship, juxtaposing arts from previously segregated

1. Public Broadcasting Service 1988.

categories, and calling attention to the defining (and redefining) power of display context. Concern with the ethics of cultural ownership is also moving center-stage, thanks largely to the rising volume of voices coming from third- and fourth-world populations, cultural studies programs, and spectators of the postmodern scene from the fields of literature, history, philosophy, economics, and political science. Rights of interpretation are under lively discussion; cultural authority is being renegotiated; the privileged status of long established canons is under attack; and museum acquisition policies designed to maximize the preservation of data and the growth of scientific knowledge are being contested by more ethically-focused debates aimed at responsible de-accessioning and repatriation.

We're also witnessing, across the board, a growing tendency for the hierarchies that assigned distinct roles (and value) to fine and folk, art and craft, primitive and modern, high and low to give way to investigations of these categories' interpenetrations and an insistent deconstruction of the categories themselves. This change is especially important for Afro-American studies, simply because writing on African diaspora arts has spread over these categories more (that is, has privileged one particular category less) than, say, writing on European or African or Far Eastern arts. While it would not be grossly off the mark to depict European art history as devoting its primary attention to the "fine" arts, African art history to "tribal" (or "primitive" or whatever label people use for the "not-so-fine") arts, and Central American art history to "folk" arts, people writing on arts of the African diaspora have shown a greater tendency to become as comfortable in one such category as another.

Although these changes are multifaceted in the extreme, they all operate in the direction of breaking down barriers – barriers between disciplinary perspectives, between geographical focuses, between hierarchized settings, between elite and popular media, and more. The signposts and contributing agents are too myriad to enumerate exhaustively here, but a few key markers will serve to evoke the general trend over the past decade or two. In 1984, prestigious art museums of New York City, from the Museum of Modern Art to the Metropolitan, hosted simultaneous celebrations of "tribal and modern affinities" in art, Maori art (organized by Maori curators and inaugurated with ceremonies that included nose-rubbing greetings between Mayor Koch and Maori elders flown in from New Zealand), Ashanti artifacts crafted from gold (for which the mayor returned as ceremonial host, this time in a massive parade through Central Park), Indian art from the Pacific Northwest, and arts of African adornment (see S. Price 1988). The Center for African Art opened its doors for the first time and Sotheby's and Christie's both held large, mediated auctions of "primitive" art. The next year the College Art Association added sessions on anthropological themes to its annual meeting for the first time. In 1988 and 1989, the Smithsonian sponsored major symposia explor-

ing the role of museums in a rapidly evolving social and cultural environment (Karp & Lavine 1991, Karp, Kreamer & Lavine 1992), and in 1990 National Public Radio, in collaboration with the Mexican Museum of San Francisco, formed the impeccably multicultural "Working Group on a New American Sensibility" to discuss the same range of issues for radio.² Meanwhile, Paris's global-art extravaganza, "Magiciens de la Terre," had been propelled into the center of a heated debate over its not-totally-successful realization of an uncategorized embrace of "the arts of the world" (Martin, Francis & Bouniort 1989). And since then, sparked partly by Jacques Chirac's agenda for establishing a museum of *arts premiers*, the city has hosted several large-scale international conferences designed to explore ethical and legal issues concerning cultural property, repatriation, and the like (see, for example, Vaillant & Viatte 1999, Taffin 2000, Galard n.d.). In Switzerland, nineteen contributors to an exhibit-cum-book entitled *L'art c'est l'art* (Art is art) reflected on this whole bundle of issues, including contact zones, cultural strategies behind today's art critical discourse, the international traffic in art, the classificatory transfer of objects from "ethnography" to "art," and the overlaps in categories of art such as "*contemporain, appliqué, populaire, classique, pompier, pauvre, transgressif, convenu*" (Gonseth, Hainard & Kaehr 1999). In the Netherlands, museum scholars have been asking hard questions about the political and ethical dimensions of museum displays (see, for example, Leyton & Damen 1993, Leyton 1995, Bouquet 1999). In England, Routledge has been bringing out one after another volume devoted to the same series of issues (see, for example, Greenberg, Ferguson & Nairne 1996, Barringer & Flynn 1998). And on literally every continent, community museums, with vigorous local participation, have sprung up in unprecedented numbers, providing active loci for grassroots cultural creativity and self-representation.

The metaphor that many recent commentators have adopted to reflect this gaze on the artworlds of a planet-wide network evokes a jet-age scenario of travel, with or without cultural baggage: titles refer to art "in transit" (Steiner 1994), the "traffic" in culture (Marcus & Myers 1995), "unpacking" culture (Phillips & Steiner 1999), "destination" culture (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998), and the like. Performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña (1996:6) captured the flavor of this trend when he painted himself as migrant/smuggler: "Home is always somewhere else. Home is both 'here' and 'there' or somewhere in between. Sometimes it's nowhere ... Here/there, homelessness, border culture, and deterritorialization are the dominant experience." In short, Jim

2. The group met a number of times over two or three years. In addition to the organizers, it included Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Suzan Harjo, Steven D. Lavine, Lawrence Levine, Mari Matsuda, Raymund Paredes, Richard Price, Bernice Johnson Reagon, John Kuo Wei Tchen, Trinh Minh-Ha, Marta Moreno Vega, Jim West, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, and me.

Clifford (1997) was not acting alone when, with a flick of the pen and a wink of the eye, he shifted the gaze from roots to routes.

In the mid-1980s, when all these developments were just getting off to a roaring start, there was a real danger that even as new kinds of art were being graciously admitted to elite establishment settings, the conceptual perspectives and aesthetic frameworks of the artists and critics responsible for providing them were being kept out. When the sculpture was from Oceania, the interpretive text was still, more often than not, from a mainstream northern-hemisphere tradition of discourse. While this discrepancy has not disappeared, it is beginning to come under more explicit attack, and there seems to be some promise of change. Commentators across the board have noted, quite poignantly, that a central sticking point of every artworld, mainstream or otherwise, is the question of artists' control over meaning – or lack thereof.³ Supplying the product is one thing; having a say over what it represents (aesthetically, iconographically, referentially, historically) is quite another. As we will see below, the struggle over this issue is becoming an active part of new directions in the study of art in the African diaspora.

MAPPING THE AFRO-AMERICAN ARTWORLD

None of the developments outlined above were even distant rumblings when Melville Herskovits pioneered the study of African diaspora cultures in the 1930s. A quick mini-flashback to the environment that nurtured his vision and the ways that he applied and refashioned it will serve as backdrop for a consideration of current interpretations that both refine and modify that vision in the very different political, social, and intellectual climate of our own *fin de siècle*.

Herskovits's teacher Franz Boas, even while stressing the conservatism of "primitive art" and the heavy weight of tradition on its makers, radically rephrased the task of understanding such art, by placing the artist, rather than the object, at center stage. Boas insisted on thorough, first-hand field research, on the elicitation of native explanations, on attention to the "play of the imagination" (1908:589) and the role of virtuosity, and on consideration of the artistic process as well as the finished form. In this context, the development over time of cultural expression (such as verbal, musical, or visual arts) was not, as previous generations of scholars had often either assumed or argued, a reflection of unilinear human evolution, but rather a more complex mixture of diffusion, borrowing, independent invention, and a host of other processes effected by individuals both following the guidelines of their respectively inherited traditions and gently adapting them under the influence of their

3. See, for example, Belting 1987, Lippard 1990, Marcus 1995, Sullivan 1995.

creative impulses and their lived experiences, which included modest amounts of intercultural contact. In the regnant anthropological models of Herskovits's training, individuals were beginning to be recognized as something more than passive executors of an inevitable march from barbarity to civilization, but they remained firmly anchored in the cultural heritages of their birth, despite the leeway of individual difference and variable amounts of stimulation from "outside."⁴

In the context of a Caribbeanist journal, it is hardly necessary to spell out the ways that Herskovits built on this general foundation, developing ideas such as retention, syncretism, and reinterpretation. Suffice it to say such concepts served to bring a comprehensible sense of order, helping him to deal with the history of a social and cultural universe unlike any of those confronted by his anthropological predecessors (or even his peers) – one built by vast numbers of people wrenched from the settings of their birth, transported far away in death-drenched hordes, and forced to mold a viable way of life in cooperation with others from different settings who had undergone the same recent trauma. Unlike the work of American Indianists of his generation, which involved the analytical reconstruction of decimated cultural wholes (Boas's goal of abstracting back past modernity to reach a vision of what had once been a viable "authentic" culture), Herskovits's task centered on both loss and creativity, both rupture and continuity. Interpreting the world of Africans in the Americas was a new challenge, requiring the invention of new analytical tools, and those that Herskovits fashioned on the basis of his training and his multiple field experiences allowed him to propose models for cultural transitions of a rapidity unprecedented and unparalleled in the anthropological record.

Within this vision, history often took the form of continent-to-continent processes, involving peoples more than people and discernible largely through culture-to-culture comparisons. The historical study of art, which constituted part of the enterprise, followed suit. Artistic specificities in the New World tended to be explained in terms of more or less direct linkages to particular or generalized African origins more than to cultural developments in particular or generalized environments in the Americas, though the latter came into play as well.

4. Others trained by Boas were assessing the contribution of individuality to cultural patterns in the context of American Indian ethnography; see, for example, Ruth Bunzel's careful exploration of the creative imagination in Pueblo pottery (1929). Across the Atlantic, Herskovits's contemporary Raymond Firth responded to the British variant of this approach by stressing the freedom of individuals within the normative systems that served to circumscribe acceptable behavior and by focusing attention on "the position of the creative faculty of the native artist in relation to his conformity to the local style" (Firth 1936:28).

Still fast-forwarding through developments that need no elaboration in the present context, we zip past the Herskovits-Frazier debate (sensitively developed in Yelvington 2001) and pause at the Mintz and Price position just long enough to note its attempt to sharpen our vision of early cultural processes. Not eschewing Herskovits's claims for the importance of African input (as some commentators have imagined), but rather applying new standards for tracing the nature of intercontinental connections, Mintz and Price endorsed a position more firmly anchored in non-speculative history and more concerned with the actual mechanics of cultural process (in specific places, at specific historical periods, under specific conditions of colonial rule). They benefited, of course, from a wealth of ethnographic information that had not been available to Herskovits, but they were also writing at a time when many of their arguments had to be presented in programmatic terms. What they offered were suggestive leads that, when submitted to the test of further historical and ethnographic research, held the chance of producing a closer, more verifiable vision of the ways that real people, both individually and as groups, worked out cultural solutions to the challenges posed by their remarkable collective ordeal.

One linchpin of their argument came straight from Herskovits (1935:169): "to trace Africanisms in the behavior of [U.S.] American Negroes," he wrote, "comparison with the customs of the Negroes of the Caribbean must be made before we can think of correlation with the complexities of West African civilizations." The range of ethnographic sites he incorporated into his research reflected his firm commitment to the importance of thinking in broad comparative terms; his gaze on the arts was no exception. But in many subsequent studies of art, following through on the kind of all-encompassing spread that Herskovits attempted to include in his ethnographic field (spanning, on this side of the Atlantic, Brazil, Haiti, coastal and interior Suriname, Trinidad, the United States, Cuba, and more) has frequently provided the icing more than the cake.⁵ The widespread tendency to conceptualize "Afro- or African

5. There are, of course, many exceptions. To name just a few: Sandra Barnes's excellent collection of studies on *Ogun* (1997) explores variants of this West African god in the Americas in terms of religion, body arts, dance, and more; her introduction to the volume offers an insightful reading of the balance between specificities and common ground, and contributions by art historian Henry Drewal, performance theorist Margaret Thompson Drewal, anthropologist Karen McCarthy Brown, and others bring materials from Brazil, Haiti and other parts of the Americas into focus with ethnographic research on West African societies. John Nunley and Judith Bettelheim (1988) integrate New Orleans, Brooklyn, Toronto, and London in their overview of Caribbean festival arts. And Richard Powell's excellent overview of contemporary U.S. African-American art and culture in the Thames & Hudson "World of Art" series (1997) shows a healthy willingness to stray beyond the country's borders when artists' lives and patterns of influence demand a wider purview.

America" as "Afro- or African U.S.A." has been responsible for limiting the scope of any number of comprehensive art surveys when more robust attention to regional comparison could have significantly enhanced the country-based insights. Widely read books such as Samella Lewis's *African American Art and Artists* (1990) and Sharon Patton's *African-American Art* (1998), which fail to mention even the most influential of Caribbean artists such as Wifredo Lam, show how persistent this tendency is, even among experienced scholars writing authoritative texts for today's market.⁶

Herskovits's call for a broad geographical definition of our responsibilities needs to be complemented by a parallel call for breadth in our disciplinary and "typological" vision of the field. Partly because of all the "traffic" that recent scholars have underscored, and partly because of the new prominence of crossover influences (folk/fine, etc.), scholars have begun to reflect increased awareness of the extent to which the study of art in this or that setting leaves important factors out of the picture.⁷ The "affinities" between Picasso's art and African masks or the Surrealists' love affair with the Pacific Northwest and Oceania in the early part of the twentieth century could be analyzed in terms of a "here" (homes, galleries, museums, and studios in Europe and the United States) and a "there" (remote settlements far away), with selected objects being transported along a one-way route. But artworld traffic now runs along a much busier thoroughfare – in terms of cultural geography, in terms of the hierarchy of traditional art scholarship, in terms of the

6. Regional scope inevitably raises the question of whether (and how) we can talk about "black" culture or art; see, for example, Powell 1997. In a series of lectures presented in 1997 at the College of William and Mary, novelist David Bradley argued against the notion of a "black" anything. Recounting the story of a student who once presented him with what she called a "black sonnet," he defended his position that she had produced nothing of the sort. To convince him that her poem was a "black sonnet," he told her, she would have to show that its metric structure was characteristic of poems by other black poets, and uncommon elsewhere. The fact that she had written a poem and that she was black, he insisted, was irrelevant to the definition of a genre of sonnet. My own position is that the common thread running through plastic and graphic arts in the (entire) African diaspora is not purely (or even necessarily) a matter of the artist's phenotype or the object's formal properties (though one could argue the case), but also emerges from more broadly-defined cultural orientations that nurture the form, meaning, context, and uses of art objects, as well as the nature of the creative process that produces them. More on this below.

7. Another (absolutely defining) contribution to the workings of today's artworlds that Herskovits had no need to consider in his vision of diaspora art (and remained virtually negligible when I began writing about Maroon art) is that of legislators, lawyers, and judges. The whole thorny bundle of questions concerning cultural property and the legal definition of artistic originality in an age of sampling and Photoshop are deeply entangled in multicultural ideologies and rapidly inflating economic stakes.

division between producers and commentators, and in terms of media. It is no longer a one-way route, it is no longer just the objects that are traveling, and participants from the African diaspora are among the most frequent flyers. While Picasso's exploitation of African masks as inspiration for the prostitutes in his *Demoiselles d'Avignon* may have caused European art history to turn a corner in the early years of the twentieth century, today's appropriative possibilities are being defined in more multilayered terms. The *Demoiselles* themselves have been reappropriated by African American artists – see, for example, Faith Ringgold's *Picasso's Studio* and Robert Colescott's *Les Demoiselles d'Alabama* (discussed and illustrated in Gibson 1998 and Patton 1998:236-38, respectively). Or again, Ringgold's *The Picnic at Giverny* depicts Picasso as the (nude) model in a gender-reversal of Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, set in the garden of Monet's *Nymphéas*, with Ringgold and ten other (fully clothed) American women artists and writers having a picnic and discussing the role of women in art;⁸ Margo Humphrey's *The Last Bar-B-Que* gives a twist, at once self-critical and celebratory, to one of Western art history's most venerated scenes (Powell 1997:160); and in the hands of Jean-Michel Basquiat, who took from Pollock, de Kooning, and Rauschenberg on the one end and "the guys painting on the trains" on the other, a depiction of "him and Andy Warhol duking it out in boxing attire is not as innocent and playful as it appears to be" (hooks 1995:36, 42).

Diverse back-and-forths of cultural expression have nurtured developments in the diaspora ever since its transport-initiated beginnings, with significant contacts marking every period. The specifics of those contacts – the history of the late nineteenth-century slave trade to Cuba and Brazil, the migrations and return migrations linking Caribbean islands with Amsterdam, New York, London, Miami, Paris, and Toronto, the aesthetic notions carried by Haitian higglers, Saramaka loggers, southern U.S. day laborers, and the like as they travel away from home, the pilgrimages of late twentieth-century U.S. African Americans to West African sites determined by genealogical research, and so forth – are essential to respect in any attempt to map the arts of the African diaspora.

The border-crossing complexity of today's international artworld is apparent in any number of contexts. I cite a few random examples. Maroons from the rainforest of the Guianas now appear frequently on the stages of France, Germany, Holland, and the United States and their arts back home incorporate

8. The women include Emma Amos, Michele Wallace, Johnnetta Cole, and seven others – all identified; the text running between the acrylic-on-canvas scene and the patchwork fabric border, about 900 words, spells out the thoughts Ringgold wanted to communicate (about Paris, nature, painting, sexism and feminism, racism, artistic freedom) and preempts the critics' role by, for example, explaining why the artist at the easel is wearing a white dress. For the full text, see Cameron *et al.* 1998:131-32.

elements of Western culture such as satellite-launching rockets (in wood-carving motifs), and a Coca Cola bottling machine (in "traditional" genres of dance). Bob Marley's music is global. Martiniquan plasticians trained at Paris's School of Fine Arts devote much of their artistic energy to capturing the spiritual essence of Carib Indian culture. Romare Bearden worked into his collages the Vodou ceremonies of Haitian immigrants in St. Martin that he witnessed thanks to his friendship with an American graduate student in anthropology. Carnival art throughout the diaspora – from Toronto to Bahia and from Brooklyn to Notting Hill Gate – takes its inspiration from globe-wide offerings (Pocahontas as the mascot in Martinique after the Disney movie came out, Monica "A-Boca-de-Ouro" Lewinsky honored in Bahia's 1998 Carnival). And so on.

The aspect of this global network that remains underdeveloped, relative to actual artistic production, is, as bell hooks has pointed out, art criticism. Citing a *Time* magazine cover story called "Black Renaissance: African American Artists Are Truly Free At Last" (October 1994), she laments that it

assessed the development and public reception of works by black artists without engaging, in any way, the ideas and perspectives of African-American scholars who write about the visual arts. The blatant absence of this critical perspective serves to highlight the extent to which black scholars who write about art, specifically about work created by African American artists, are ignored by the mainstream. Ironically, the insistence in this essay that the "freedom" of black artists can be measured solely by the degree to which the work of individual artists receives attention in the established white-dominated art world exposes the absence of such freedom. (hooks 1995:110-11)

While minor progress has begun to be made toward an African American presence in the art history programs of mainstream universities (I had one African American graduate student when I taught in the Princeton Art Department, the chair of Duke's Art History Department is African American, etc.), most of the work remains to be done, even in contexts that should by any reckoning be well ahead of *Time* magazine: *African Arts* is still a largely white-run enterprise, Grove's new \$8,800 dictionary of art (Turner 1996) consists of thirty-four hefty volumes, but has no entry on Romare Bearden, and the texts for many colleges' introductory art history courses follow suit despite their 800-1200-page comprehensiveness. But it's useful to remember that traditional entrees into a field are not the only ones, and it seems to me that, even without passing through academic departments or glossy magazines, African-American voices are beginning to contribute to the arena of interpretation and gatekeeping in other ways.

Unlike some African societies, where it is said that particular individuals are identifiable as "critics" (see, for example, Thompson 1973:22-23), communities in the diaspora tend not to assign artistic criticism to designated

specialists. Among Maroons in Suriname, for example, there is no notion of designated "connoisseurs" whose pronouncements about particular works of art might hold particular authority and there is no conceptual dividing line between artist and critic.⁹ And in the United States, Bearden took time out from his prolific artistic production to write both an analytical study of composition and a comprehensive history of (U.S.) African American art (Bearden & Henderson 1993, Bearden & Holty 1969).¹⁰

Indeed, African American (like other non-traditionally-mainstream) artists have begun exploiting, with increasing frequency and impressive vigor, direct textual means of getting their perspectives through. The effect is to force their intended focus onto the canvas (broadly defined) itself, to cut off at the pass irrelevant art historical readings, or at least underscore their status as outside opinions. Conceptual artist Adrian Piper represents a particularly stunning example, saturating her visual art with direct speech from artist to viewer – via cartoon bubbles, calling card texts, loudspeakers, headphones, or any other means she can harness. Much photographic art by African Americans also draws viewers in through text: Lorna Simpson combines body language and printed plaques; Clarissa Sligh's art "always includes words ... as an attempt to correct what is written about black people as 'criminals and on welfare'" (Lippard 1990:52, 21); Pat Ward Williams covers photographic works such as *Accused/Blowtorch/Padlock* with scrawled writing to create scathing political statement (Patton 1998:Fig. 130); and Floyd Newsum uses densely written script as a frame (Lewis 1990:182). Similar expressive strategies are central to the "image-text" art of Keith Piper (Mercer 1997:56) and others in the "Black British" artworld (Willis 1997). A long autobiographical poem by Nuyorican Miguel Piñero holds pride of place in an oil painting by his friend Martin Wong, who fills marginal plaques with additional texts, one

9. The generalization of art criticism within a given population means that studying its criteria often requires an openness to modes of expression that do not fit the researcher's expectations. As Clifford Geertz (1983:94-120) has put it, "art talk" has been reported as rarely as it has for non-Western societies, not because people in such societies don't engage in it, but because it frequently assumes forms that are different from those of Western art criticism. This important point has an exact parallel in discourse about history (see R. Price 1983:6-8).

10. It should be noted that this contrasts sharply with the European tradition in which, as Dominique de Menil put it, "Matisse's 'Those who want to give themselves to painting should begin by cutting out their tongues' and Braque's remark that 'in art, there's only one thing that matters: that which cannot be explained' are brutal reminders that, as Malraux said it, 'the only language of painting is painting.' And even Baudelaire spoke of 'the dreadful uselessness of explaining no matter what to no matter who'" (Babadzan 1984:11). (Or, as Picasso is said to have said, "Don't talk to the driver.") For more on the separation (and even counter-current agendas) of art production and art commentary, see Belting 1987.

of which he further inscribes as part of the painting itself in the form of hands signing for the deaf (Lippard 1990:194). And for U.S. artist Aminah Robinson, the narrative is embedded "deep inside the quilt," but just to make sure it gets across, she supplements her simultaneously "traditional" and dazzlingly innovative patchwork pieces with handwritten stories that "snake and twist around" in a style critics have compared to the indirection of black rap (Grudin 1990:36-37).

Not necessarily emerging from these artists' ethnic identity as such, the insertion of a verbal component into a visual work of art reflects, I would argue, their response to a system in which creative individuals marginalized by the mainstream art world insist on having their say – and in expressive modes of their own choosing. Examples from the work of Chicanos, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, and others support this interpretation; the text/image merger has been carried to its logical extreme in the *imagenes apalabradas* (verbalized images) of Puerto Rican graphic artist Antonio Martorell, in which the very density of his cursive script becomes a powerful visual statement and the composition of his imagery constitutes its own interpretive text.¹¹ Even when such texts do not offer anything that could be construed as art critical "interpretation," they perform the very important task of calling attention to artistic agency. Behind this work, they say, stands an articulate individual, someone with a specific point to communicate, who demands that as you, the viewer, commune with the visual form, you also listen for the (cultural, political, or social) message that it's trying to get across.

Let's turn now to the specific realm of African-American textile arts.

SEAMING CONNECTIONS

Acknowledging that textile arts were severely underrepresented in studies of African-American art until very recently, I begin with the most notable exception to the rule. Robert Farris Thompson has pioneered art historical connections across the entire "Black Atlantic" with stunning ambitiousness and personal gusto. In what is certainly the boldest attempt on record to pin down the seam that joins the textile arts of two continents, he has argued that "the creolized cloths of Bahia, the over-one-shoulder capes of the Djuka and Saamaka maroons in Suriname, and the string-quilts of the black South in the United States ... are unthinkable except in terms of partial descent from Mande cloth" (Thompson 1983:208). It is just this sort of connection-drawing that has inspired so many others interested in uncovering the foundations of African-American expressive culture to follow his lead. His enthusiasm, and the com-

11. See Martorell 1991 and 1995, Tió 1995, and, for further examples of the use of text in the imagery of a "multicultural" range of U.S. American artists, Lippard 1990.

patibility of his stance with an ideological climate thirsty for connectedness to the African continent, have prompted many to read such assertions as uncontested truths. What begins as an art historian's marveling at visual similarities of color and composition becomes, in its recycling, historical fact. Michael A. Gomez (1998:86), for example, writes: "the research of Thompson ... has revealed that, at least in the area of quilting, African Americans exhibit what are clearly Mande influences."

The joy that Thompson finds in similarities between cultural forms in African and African American societies has shown itself to be both contagious and ideologically empowering, and one might argue that pushing too hard on its foundation is an act of gross curmudgeonry. And yet, if the story of Africa's legacy to the Americas is to be told with the respect it deserves, it ultimately needs to fit with everything we know. In that spirit, let's take a dispassionate look at the basis of claims such as that which makes textile arts in Brazil, Suriname, and the United States "unthinkable" except in terms of Mande origins. Close examination of the endnotes to *Flash of the Spirit* (1983) reveals that numerous pivotal assertions cannot be traced by readers because the sources are listed as unpublished work in progress by himself and others (e.g., pp. 282, 284, 292, 298, 300) or because they rely on phone conversations (e.g., pp. 286, 287, 297), notes he made on a "family scrapbook" (p. 289), or "personal communications" (throughout). Furthermore, Thompson "modifies, elides, or adds to" some quotations (p. 300) and has "slightly retranslated" or "expanded" others (pp. 276, 277, 279, 281, 302). He has also "corrected" attributions (pp. 215-17, 279, 296), misreported statistics (pp. 215, 296), and given dates that are at best "informed guesses" (p. 275). A particularly striking feature of the scholarly apparatus is the tendency to document important claims by reference to studies that turn out to have been papers written for him by undergraduate students at Yale (Thompson 1983:293-94, 295-96).

Perhaps the ultimate indication that Thompson has successfully imbibed the essence of Anansi, the mischievous trickster spider of West African and African-American folktales, is provided on page 221 of *Flash of the Spirit*. There, an assertion of the power of patchwork dresses to afford protection against *jumbie* spirits in the British West Indies bears an endnote that reads simply: "*Yale Course Critique*, 1973, p. 60." Although few readers will go back to the original document, those who do will find the image of a handsome young man attired in a fashionable sports jacket for sale at the Yale University branch of Saks Fifth Avenue. The text (provided by a local authority on Caribbean patchwork?) explains:

In the Antilles, patchwork means good luck.

Every true West Indian wears patchwork so the jumbie has no resting place. The continentals who visit there will be joyfully received, when wearing our evil spirit-defying patchwork madras sport coat. Predominantly red or blue for 35 to 44 sizes, \$70.

This is not to say that informal interviews, phone conversations, personal communications, course critiques, and the like should be off-limits for responsible research; no scholar fails to use such resources occasionally to confirm, reinforce, or add rhetorical flavor to less elusive documentation. But the discovery of misrepresentation in sources that *are* traceable (through dogged, doubt-driven detective work – submitting ILL requests, consulting colleagues in various parts of the diaspora, conducting complex Internet searches, emailing middle-aged Yale graduates at their law offices and consulting firms) tends to unsettle the credibility of the myriad personal conversations, on or off the phone, on which Thompson hangs so much of his narrative. I offer just one more example from the realm of textile arts (for others, see S. Price 1999): Thompson (1983:215) presents an early nineteenth-century illustration of a garment labeled “Indian loincloth” (declaring on grounds of an alleged color preference that it had in fact to have been a Maroon loincloth, but see below), and speculatively linking it to Ashanti weavers “working under Mande influences radiating from Kong and from Bonduku, north-west of the Akan and north of Cap Lahou, whence sailed to Suriname 50 percent of a sample of Dutch slaving ships.” The source in his note could scarcely be more impeccable: Richard Price’s *The Guiana Maroons* (1976), pp. 14–15. The glitch becomes evident only when we look back at that source and discover that the “50 percent” figure does not refer simply to a random “sample of Dutch slaving ships,” but rather to a (56-ship) sample of *those Dutch slaving ships that transported Africans from the Windward Coast* – an area which, as Price’s pages 14–15 make clear, supplied between 0% and 49% of Suriname slaves (depending on the particular moment) during the course of the eighteenth century. (See S. Price 1999 for a demonstration that both the “corrected” attribution and the alleged color preference also crumble when tested against primary sources.)

Similarly mischievous tactics have been found to lie behind Thompson’s claims for unbroken historical continuities in Brazilian capoeira. Luiz Renato Vieira and Matthias Röhring Assunção (1998) examine a set of widespread myths that surround this dance/martial art form, including the idea that the *berimbau* (now considered “the soul of the capoeira orchestra”) can be traced directly to Africa, and label Thompson’s support for this popular misconception “a manipulation of sources and facts.” They cite his commentary on an 1835 engraving (“Jogar Capoeira ou danse de la guerre” by Johann Moritz Rugendas) in which the only musical instrument is a small drum, different from the *atabaque* used today, and in which “none of the traditional instruments of modern capoeira appear.” Thompson writes:

No later than 1835 berimbau ... was being used to fuel the capoeira martial art. This we know because Rugendas in an illustration shows two men in a roda, one doing the basic step, the ginga, at left, and the other, at right,

apparently executing a step called *queixada*. They are in combat. Hand-clapping and a drum accompany their battle. But close examination of a man standing next to the drummer shows that he has a musical bow and is pulling open his shirt, probably to place the calabash-resonator of his instrument against his naked stomach in Kongo-Angola manner. (Vieira & Assunção 1998:85-86)

Vieira and Assunção argue that if the painter had seen this supremely "exotic" instrument (depicted by other artists of his time, but never in the context of capoeira), he would have had every motivation to show it as part of the scene he was representing. Ultimately, they invite their readers to view the engraving and confirm for themselves that no *berimbau* lurks within its shadows.

These can easily be seen as picky, esoteric, and potentially irritating arguments – not the sort of sleuthing that historical and anthropological researchers normally like to conduct, especially because of the danger that it could be interpreted in personal terms. To my knowledge, the only other writer who has called Thompson to task in anything like this fashion is bell hooks (1995:114), who goes to some lengths to reiterate the non-*ad hominem* nature of her position. "Although I am critical of his theory and practice, this did not mean that I did not like him," she writes, quoting herself speaking to a conference organizer who had assumed the contrary.¹² "The fear of being perceived as personally attacking colleagues, or of making personal enemies, effectively censors meaningful critique and closes off the possibility that there will be meaningful, dialectical, and critical conversation and debate among colleagues," she continues, insisting nonetheless: "The theory and practice that inform Thompson's work should be rigorously and critically interrogated."

Sprinkling a few grains of salt on Thompson's monumental contribution does not, fortunately, dessicate African and African-American textile research. On the contrary, there has been an explosion of attention to both sides of the Atlantic (with special weight given to the southern United States), a certain amount of it directly due to the inspiring lectures and writing of Thompson himself.¹³

Three central contributions to the African diaspora portion of this literature may serve to exemplify key aspects of current scholarship on the subject – Gladys-Marie Fry's *Stitched from the Soul*, Eli Leon's *Models in the Mind*, and Maude Wahlman's *Signs and Symbols*. I begin with Wahlman and Leon.

12. The line she draws between personal affect and critical thinking applies just as emphatically to my own critique. During the five years R.P. and I spent in New Haven in the 1970s, dinners with the Thompsons ranked among our most enjoyable and stimulating social evenings. Conversely, I would argue, it is perfectly possible to admire the work of a scholar for whom one does not have a great deal of admiration in personal terms.

13. For starters, see Idiens & Ponting 1980, Ferris 1982, 1983, Fry 1986, 1990, Leon 1987, 1992, Grudin 1990, Vlach 1990, Wahlman 1993, Adler & Barnard 1995, Tobin & Dobard 1999.

We note, first, that both pay respectful homage to the quilters whose work is featured, in the form of individual photographic and narrative portraits. And both represent attempts to identify the African components in U.S. African-American quilts, taking care to raise the question of alternative influences from Euro-American traditions before, for the most part, dismissing them in favor of an African-based interpretation.¹⁴

The forty-four women and one man featured in these two books are all twentieth-century (U.S.) African-American quilters – most of the illustrated pieces postdate 1970. Their work is compared to numerous twentieth-century (or in a few cases undated) African pieces plus a light smattering of examples from other points in the diaspora (Caribbean islands, Suriname, Brazil).¹⁵ The illustrations thus create a corpus of several hundred contemporaneous elements, which serve as the visual foundation for the authors' arguments. In both cases, the thesis is that, in Wahlman's words (1993:vii), "most African-American quilting derives its aesthetic from various African traditions, both technological and ideological" or, as Leon (1992:3) puts it: "Carried in memory – transmitted from generation to generation without printed instructions – patchwork esthetics and technology had the potential, even under the extreme adversity of the African-American experience, to survive the Atlantic crossing and thrive on this continent."

In both cases, then, a historical argument is illustrated with an ahistorical corpus of objects. This leaves several (complementary, not competing) options for supplying the historical connection. Among the many possibilities, one could, for example,

- (1) delineate the features most responsible for the visual similarity in the late twentieth century (compositional principles, use of colors, etc.), and reason that they are most likely to have occurred via a generation-to-generation transmission in the specific realm of textiles;
- (2) scour museums, archives, and other primary sources for early African-American objects that display aesthetic or technological similarities with African pieces from a comparable period, thus pushing the visual match

14. It bears noting that "patchwork" and "quilt" are frequently paired, but definitely not synonymous terms. This distinction becomes relevant when we consider the nature of African textile traditions (barkcloth or woven strips edge-sewn along their selvages) since, as Leon points out from the start, it introduces different technical considerations in planning the composition. In contrast to the very great majority of both African and U.S. textiles, Maroon patchwork is *neither* quilted *nor* edge-sewn, another technical distinction that demands to be taken into account when examples from tropical Afro-America are added to the comparison.

15. Wahlman (1993) also includes one illustration of a cloth fragment from the eleventh-twelfth century; Leon (1992:12) dates one illustrated cloth as "c. 1870-1900."

- closer to a time when Africans were being transported to the Americas, reasoning that this increases the plausibility of asserting a direct, medium-specific continuity;
- (3) probe the recollections of African-American quilters (some of whom were quite elderly when they were interviewed by Leon, Wahlman, and others) for specific fragments of the collective memory that Leon evokes, working back toward a clearer vision of the technological, ideological, and aesthetic considerations that would have guided quilters in the middle and late nineteenth century;
 - (4) explore regional constants across the various textile arts of Afro-America through elicitation (from the producers and users of the textiles) of technological, ideological, aesthetic, or social associations, in an attempt to bolster and/or correct Western-authored speculation about what it is that constitutes a conceptual link between the African and African-American examples;
 - (5) expand the playing field to include aspects of life that have nothing to do with cloth, looking for evidence that particular features common to both corpuses of illustrations were kept alive in some form even when they were not being transmitted through textile arts.

Of these, option (1) enters the picture to some degree in virtually any exploration of the subject; it does not, however, pass (art) historical muster on its own, because of the extent to which it represents undocumented conjecture. For this reason, every scholar addressing the subject has attempted to supplement it with more specific, concrete arguments.

Option (2) is the strategy that Thompson tried to implement by reading an early nineteenth-century loincloth illustration as the depiction of an African-American artifact. The transmission he proposes is far from direct: the patchwork construction of the loincloth is attributed to a "radiation" of influence that occurred in an area to the northwest of the Akan and to the north of a port (Cap Lahou) that supplied a particular portion (more in Thompson's view than in my reading of the sources) of slaves to Suriname, where it was made by a Maroon and then traded to an Indian, whose preference for solid red (Thompson asserts) was strong enough so that he wouldn't have made it, but weak enough so that he might well have bought it from the Maroon.¹⁶ Like

16. The demonstration that this scenario doesn't hold, which depends on a number of ethnographic details and historical sources, has been spelled out in S. Price 1999. In addition to the data presented there, the illustrations of patterned Indian garments in Stedman's eighteenth-century *Narrative* (1790:319, 467) provide further proof against Thompson's claim that Indians wore only solid-color clothing, as does, in fact, the woman's pubic apron shown right next to the loincloth on which Thompson builds his claim of Mande influence.

Gomez (cited above), Wahlman has recycled Thompson's Mande/Akan/Cap Lahou/Suriname slave/Suriname Maroon/Suriname Indian scenario as fact, deleting two of the principle players (the Indian and Thompson) and, under the heading "African Textiles in the New World," declaring: "An 1823 illustration shows a Mande-like loincloth made from three strips of cotton, two patterned and the center one plain, as in nineteenth-century Asante cloth from Ghana" (Wahlman 1993:25).

Option (3) has been endorsed in principle by much of the recent scholarship on the subject, and the inclusion of biographical sketches signals a welcome respect for the individual artists behind the textiles.¹⁷ To date, however, the interviews on which these sketches are based have dealt mainly with anecdotal childhood memories rather than the stylistic specifics that would produce art historical depth; the artists tend to make mention of family relations, daily life, technical details of sewing, and the personal joy of creating a beautiful pattern, without devoting attention in any sustained fashion to the relationship between their late twentieth-century art and that of their grandmothers (that is, specific similarities *and differences* over time in materials, compositional principles, social uses, symbolic meanings, etc.).

The literature on African-American textile arts has also utilized option (4), though I would characterize its attention to other parts of the diaspora as scattered and relatively token, compared to what it could be. In general, the comparative material in U.S.-focused studies is selected on the basis of its power to support unifying connections, often through purely visual similarity, and thus constitutes an unrepresentative sample of the larger corpus.¹⁸

It is useful to note that the *début* of this literature on transatlantic connections in art came at a time when interest in African roots was exploding in the United States.¹⁹ From the flowering of Black Studies programs to the TV serialization of Alex Haley's *Roots*, a tidal wave of interest in the African contribution to American culture was sweeping the country. It was in this particular climate that outsiders defined the recognized range of Maroon textile arts

17. Photo-portraits, biographical information, and interviews on/with artists are becoming, if not standard, at least increasingly common in the literature on art of the African diaspora; see, for example, Beauchamp-Byrd et al. 1997, Brettell et al. 1989, Chopin & Chopin 1998, Ferris 1982, Fortune 1994, and SECCA 1990. This development constitutes a crucial enrichment to the field, allowing "folk" artists to emerge from the anonymity that much writing from an earlier era had consigned them to.

18. In other fields as well, succumbing to the temptation to select data according to how well it supports a pet theory carries significant, if imperceptible costs. For an exploration of the consequences of this risk in feminist interpretations of menstrual customs, see S. Price 1994.

19. As Eva Grudin (1990:7) notes, "Quilt texts published before 1970 hardly ever mentioned the existence of black-made quilts. Before 1970 the African-American quilting tradition was largely ignored, even in the black community."

(which included at least five aesthetically and technically distinct styles, from appliqué to cross-stitch), focusing attention virtually exclusively on the narrow-strip art in vogue during the half century ending around 1970. This continues to be true, even though the very different techniques that preceded and followed (or coincided with) that style have now been amply documented for about two decades. The choice, though unacknowledged as such, made strategic sense for scholars bent on establishing medium-specific links with Africa – narrow-strip textiles bore a striking visual resemblance to numerous African textile traditions and hence played well in the reconstruction of transatlantic tie-ins. Other forms of decorative sewing practiced by the Maroons receded into the background, and narrow-strip patchwork was offered up as “the” Maroon textile art as surely as men’s woodcarving had been presented as “the” art of the Maroons by earlier generations, who thus overlooked artistic forms produced by women. In photographs that set African textiles side-by-side with Maroon textiles (see, for example, Thompson 1983:216), there is no visual indication that one is composed of strips that are locally woven, salvaged, and edge-sewn while the other consists of pieces of imported trade cotton with raw edges that are seamed and then turned under on the wrong side to form a meticulously hemmed finish. Nor is it usual to call attention to this distinction in the accompanying text. Rather, the photographic similarity is assumed to speak for itself, testifying to the power of African sensibilities to survive the Middle Passage, slavery, and three centuries of life in the Americas.

This brings us to option (5). Leon’s notion of “models in the mind” flirts with this approach, interpreting the “uncanny similarities” visible between African and American textiles partly through an emphasis on spontaneous improvisation that plays out aesthetic principles and motifs from other media (designs painted on walls, chalked on walls, incised on calabashes, and hammered on brass containers), calling on them to “inform spontaneous esthetic decisions” in the medium of textiles as well (Leon 1992:21, 17, 4). This image of innovation in a particular domain drawing on models experienced outside of that domain is not far from the “underlying principles” that lay at the heart of Mintz and Price’s program for an understanding of early African-American culture history. The argument for attention to this option in interpretations of the developmental history of Maroon textile arts has been presented in detail elsewhere,²⁰ but a nutshell summary will be helpful here since it ultimately represents the most concrete demonstration of the “Mintz and Price” approach to transatlantic connections that I know in the realm of art.

It begins with a dilemma. Despite the visual closeness of Maroon narrow-strip patchwork to countless African textiles, we know from ethnographic,

20. The argument was proposed in S. and R. Price 1980 and has most recently been laid out in S. and R. Price 1999.

archival, and museological evidence that the Maroon version did not exist prior to the second half of the nineteenth century. If this realization forces us to abandon the idea that it was handed down from generation to generation (by which process it would have passed from one continent to another), how can we then account for the undeniable aesthetic similarities? The answer most compatible with the full range of evidence currently available hinges on a convergence, triggered by events in coastal Suriname, of continuities in separate domains of Maroon life. On the one hand, Maroon rhythmic aesthetics have always favored interruptive patterns in everything from informal speech, song, and folktales to dancing and drumming. On the other, Maroon visual aesthetics favor sharp color contrasts over close color blendings. Both of these preferences have been documented through time, beginning in the eighteenth century with the remarks of resident German missionaries who complained, for example, that sermons were being punctuated with interjections from the congregation (see R. Price 1990:254), or Dutch observations that Maroons liked to dress in combinations of "jumping-at-the-eye" colors (see, for example, Coster 1866:26-28, Van Coll 1903:538). Finally, we must factor in the sewing practice by which Maroon women have, for as far back as we have evidence, joined pieces of cloth with meticulously finished seams to create garments of the proper dimensions (see, for example, S. & R. Price 1999: Figures 4.1, 4.32, 4.33, 4.34, 4.35).

Stylized interruptions are not only crucial to every form of speech, narrative, music, and dance, but even enter into the conceptualization of personal feuds, creating an *hors-de-l'art* parallel to the disjunctive structure of patchwork; this is a culture in which the pan-Afro-American pattern of "call and response" informs literally every aspect of social and cultural activity. In terms of the aesthetics of color contrast, twentieth-century dress continues to reflect an explicit preference for wearing contrasts rather than blends (for example, a red waistkerchief with a yellow and green wrap-skirt). And long-term ethnography among contemporary Maroons has not only documented a continuation of the color preferences picked up by early observers, but also suggests the influence of those preferences in contexts undiscoverable through visual observation; Maroon women talk about their gardens as being intentionally laid out in patchwork-like alternations of rice varieties they classify as "red" and "white," even though the different kinds look and taste virtually the same once they get to the cooking pot. As for sewing techniques, garments from every documented period of Maroon textile history include seams joining same-color pieces of cloth.

The most plausible reading of the nature of the connective tissue between African models and twentieth-century Maroon patchwork thus relies on the uninterrupted presence of such aesthetic and technical aspects of life in the interior of the Guianas in combination with specific events in Suriname's economic and labor history. My own long-term ethnographic fieldwork, exten-

sive museum research, consultation of archives, and reading of the literature strongly suggest the following scenario. With cultural preferences that were deeply embedded in a variety of verbal, visual, and conceptual realms other than textiles, and with an equally strong but completely separate textile tradition of patching cloth through meticulous seams, the scene was set for Maroon seamstresses to create an art, executed with seams, that combined interruptive patterning and sharp color contrasts. There are compelling reasons to believe that both the aesthetic framework and the material technique were firmly in place, and that the only thing lacking prior to the twentieth century were the appropriate raw materials.

When Maroon men began earning enough money during their periodic wage-labor trips to bring back large amounts of cloth, and coastal stores began stocking bolts of colorfully striped trade cotton in addition to their earlier offerings of monochrome cloth, Maroon women, never hesitant to carry artistic ideas from one medium to another when material resources permit, would quite naturally have begun to play with the new materials. Narrow-strip patchwork would then have begun with an external spark (new cloth supplies) igniting an amalgam between long-standing elements embedded in the cultural life of the Maroons. Representing both a continuity and an innovation, these textiles can be viewed as reflecting the heritage of the earliest Africans in the Suriname interior, the creative spirit of their twentieth-century descendants, and the material dependence of Maroons on worlds well beyond the villages of the rainforest.

This approach to Maroon textile history is based on a profoundly pre-post-modern genre of anthropological research. Because the players in the story it reconstructs began to form a cohesive community three centuries ago, upon their arrival in the South American rainforest, our principal focus has been on New World developments, with the ethnographic and art critical contribution of Africanists supplying a historical base that recedes progressively as the Maroon story unfolds in time. The resulting model (developed more fully in S. & R. Price 1980, 1999) has depended, in innumerable very specific ways, on consideration of ethnographic detail through time, including attention to:

- cloth/thread/yarn supplies,
- names given to particular designs and embroidery stitches,
- cross-media design transfers and structural similarities (between different visual media, visual and musical or narrative genres, etc.),
- changes in fashion (as conveyed through interviews, song lyrics, travelers' accounts, linguistic play, and other sources),
- cultural principles of kinship and conjugal relations,
- labor patterns,
- trends in the consumption of coastal imports,
- understandings about gender-specific aesthetic preferences and aptitudes,

- techniques of sewing, storing, and laundering clothes (and even recycling them once they are torn),
- the nature and frequency of aesthetic discourse,
- the social environment of art-making,
- the tools and sequences of steps involved in each medium,

and much more – all very decisively followed through time as much as oral history, archival records, museum collections, and reading of the literature allow.

At this point, the pleas being made by African scholars such as Kwame Anthony Appiah to recognize “Africa” as a Euro-American invention (condensing “enough cultural diversity to satisfy the wildest multiculturalist” into a slave-era construct viewing it as “the home of the Negro” [1997:47]) deserve to be brought into the picture. As Appiah (1997:47) has put it:

Only recently has the idea of Africa come to figure importantly in the thinking of many Africans; and those that took up this idea got it, by and large, from European culture ... the central cultural fact of African life, in my judgment, remains not the sameness of Africa’s cultures, but their enormous diversity.

Despite art historical maps, routes of influence traced from Mande to Akan, invocation of the specifics of Kuba barkcloth, and the like, the bottom line of much recent writing on African-American textiles constitutes an effort to identify (and celebrate) their origins in a schematic, quasi-essentialized “Africa.”

Whether we phrase the problem of origins in terms of continents, countries, ethnicities, or personal contacts, no art springs nakedly from a particular source. People conduct their lives in social, economic, ideological, and physical environments, producing art on the same days that they cultivate gardens, hunt or fish, discipline children, perform rituals, discuss politics, worry about money, gossip with each other, sing, flirt, and daydream. Despite their brevity, mini-biographies like those presented by Leon and Wahlman make it clear that for the quilters who were interviewed, all these kinds of activities rubbed elbows in a single memory frame. Even the physical forms that bear witness to the aesthetic sensibilities of their makers and inspire the aesthetic admiration of their viewers carry quiet evidence of this embeddedness of art in non-art aspects of life. Discussing Akan goldweights in a recent exhibit, Appiah (1997:46) comments:

Anyone who has handled a decent number of the weights ... will have noticed quite often among these elegant objects, so obviously crafted with great skill and care, one that has a lump of unworked metal stuffed into a crevice, in a way that seems completely to destroy its aesthetic unity; or, sometimes, a well-made figure has a limb crudely hacked off. These amputations and excrescences are there because, after all, a weight is a weight: and if it doesn’t weigh the right amount, it can’t serve its function. If a gold-

weight, however finely crafted, has the wrong mass, then something needs to be added (or chopped off) to bring it to its proper size.

The visible form of works of art can depend, in ways that are invisible to the most discerning critic's eye, on considerations anchored in decidedly non-art areas of its maker's life. This is why we must exercise such care in characterizing, for example, an apparent staggering of design elements as "deliberate" (Wahlman 1993:47) or asserting that a medieval cloth's blue and white colors represent a "deliberate clashing of 'high affect colors' ... in willful, percussively contrastive, bold arrangements" (Thompson 1983:209). Aesthetic "deliberation" surely constitutes a fundamental prerogative of the artists themselves, and their increasing participation over recent decades in clarifying what is or is not the intent behind their art cannot help but introduce a salutary breath of fresh air into future art critical (and culture-historical) discourse.

Attentive readers will note that after singling out three key contributions to the literature on African-American quilts, I've gone on to discuss only two of them. No, I have not forgotten Gladys-Marie Fry.

Stitched from the Soul (1990) documents the world of slave seamstresses in the antebellum South. It describes the quilts in terms of their finished form but also (and more importantly for the issues raised in this paper) explores the world in which they were conceptualized, sewn, slept under, laundered, torn into wartime bandages, used to decorate graves or hide children escaping to the North, and more. In the process, we get precious glimpses of slave women expressing their individuality and humanity in an anonymizing, dehumanizing environment, and are able to see quilts as part of a specific social and historical setting. Focusing on a well-defined time period, and documenting her claims, not by phone calls, personal communications, or undergraduate term papers, but rather by ample doses of citations taken from books, articles, Ph.D. dissertations, and archival documents, Fry offers a textured portrait of a cultural environment that has often been slighted in traditional histories because of the dual blinders of sexism and racism. Historically and ethnographically specific descriptions of this sort are what we need more of in order to trace links across regions and periods in the African diaspora with real confidence, building, somewhere down the line, a less speculative basis than we have today for assertions about the role of Mother Africa and the expressive ways her children defined their new lives in the Americas.

Zooming In, Zooming Out

I end with two suggestions that point in opposing, but I would hope compatible, directions. As the "traffic in culture" continues to erode the distinctions once segregating first- and third- or fourth-(art)worlds, "high" and "low"

genres, producers and critics, and even anthropologists and art historians, lanes are being opened up in many exciting directions. With anthropologists reading art historical literature and vice versa, with artists increasingly demanding an interpretive role, and with the influx of voices from previously underrepresented groups gaining momentum, students of African-American art are becoming increasingly well equipped to complement research questions raised by the historical and cultural results of the Middle Passage with exploration of issues born of more contemporary geographical, ideological, disciplinary, and identitarian passages. We are intellectually enriched by being able to read the interpretive texts of Faith Ringgold's acrylic and strip-cloth story quilts, talk to Saramakas about the meaning of the dances they are performing on the Washington Mall, visit an exhibition of "Black British" art conceptualized by Caribbean-born curators based in New York, and study Romare Bearden's analysis of compositional principles, in which paintings of the Italian Renaissance are seen through the eyes of an artist equally familiar with the one in Harlem.

At the same time, the suggestive leads that such a multiplicity of resources can produce need to be reined in by the most rigorous scholarly standards, something the way a Saramaka possession god (powerful, inspirational, and untamed when it makes its first appearance) needs to be ritually "domesticated" before it can provide useful service to the community. In my own Maroon research, for example, probing details of the most nitty-gritty sort has turned out to be essential for an understanding of textile art history:

Where do Maroons get their thread, what do they use to tuck under the raw edges in preparation for hemming, and how close are their stitches? What words do they use to label these cloths as they pass from men's coastal purchases to conjugal presents to women's skirts to sacks of edge trimmings to unsewn patterns on the ground and then back to conjugal presents, men's formal wear, pieces of laundry, and finally threadbare rags? What roles do textiles play in marriages, in worship, in political investitures, in popular songs, in legal disputes, in funerals? Do people talk among themselves about aesthetic principles? What, if anything, do they have to say about symbolism? Why do they always fold clothes, wrong side out, into little wallet-size packets? Why do seamstresses sometimes lather up a newly-sewn textile with bar soap and leave it in the sun before rinsing out the suds? Why, after carefully concealing the tiny stitches used to make a seam, do they lead the thread onto a part of the cloth where it shows clearly before cutting it off? How do they deal with slips, errors, and botched designs? What features of a textile inspire praise (from men, from women) and what features are disparaged? Are clothes mended when they tear, and if so how? What tone do people adopt when they critique a six-year-old's first attempt to sew a patchwork apron? How do they talk about the obsolete arts of their grandmothers? What parts of

a garment do women use to test out new ideas and how do their experiments affect fashion trends? Do they cut the cloth with scissors, knife, or razor? Or is it ripped ... ?

Giving more consistent attention to these kinds of ostensibly "peripheral" questions (pushing them back in time with the help of every resource available, whether published, archival, museological, oral-historical, etc.), as a complement to the broader strokes that reflect visual images of African and African-American art forms, could save us from many enticing but ultimately untenable readings of Old World/New World connections. And if the Maroon case is any indication, a recognition that cultural continuities do not always respect boundaries between one context and another (that is, that they travel freely from textiles to songs, from drum rhythms to naming practices, from oracles to body language, and more) may often help to fill the breach. By simultaneously zooming in on the ethnographic "trivia" (at the scissor/knife/razor or seam/edge-sewn level) and zooming out to a gaze that places particular arts in their full cultural context and cultural systems in their full region-wide context, the complex and often very subtle ways that threads of African origin weave in and out of the diaspora's cultural fabric may come into clearer view. And as the discussion continues to shift from arthings to artworlds, the growing participation of commentators from one or another segment of the African diaspora, including the artists themselves, cannot but help lead to newly enlightening visions.

NOTE

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THE MIRACLE OF CREOLIZATION: A RETROSPECTIVE¹

Some twenty years ago, when we were colleagues at Johns Hopkins, Sid Mintz used to tell me that when he opened his mouth to say something in a seminar he was often afraid that moths might fly out. Getting up to the age he was then, I'm beginning to know whereof he spoke. In this paper, I take as my charge to expand upon certain ideas in the essay I wrote with Mintz in 1972 – which we presented publicly in 1973, brought out in offset in 1976, and published commercially, with a new preface, as *The Birth of African-American Culture*, in 1992. That preface went over some of the history of the work's reception, noting that the original publication

was greeted in some quarters by a – for us – surprising hostility, accompanied by the charge that it denied the existence of an African heritage in the Americas. It seemed that many such reactions originated in a desire to polarize Afro-Americanist scholarship into a flatly “for” or “against” position in regard to African cultural retentions. For instance, Mervyn Alleyne dubbed us “creation theorists,” charging us with exaggerated attention to the cultural creativity of enslaved Africans in the New World; yet his own book reaches conclusions close to our own. Daniel Crowley castigated Sally and Richard Price's *Afro-American Arts of the Suriname Rain Forest*, which develops the conceptual approach in a particular historical context, as “badly oversta[ting] a good case.” Joey Dillard found the authors “not completely on the side of the angels,” their arguments “controversial if not positively heretical.” (Mintz & Price 1992: viii)

During the past few years, since that essay has reached a wider audience, these controversies have intensified. Indeed, I now find myself (and my work, including but hardly limited to the M&P essay) caught up as never before in

1. The title phrase is shamelessly borrowed from Michel-Rolph Trouillot's (1998:8) most recent excursion into the wondrous phenomenon of creolization.

a series of sometimes acrimonious debates. My intent in this paper is to try to define some of the issues, clarify what is theoretically and methodologically at stake, and suggest ways that aspects of the "M&P model" might usefully be employed in the continuing exploration of African American pasts.²

It is among historians of North American slavery that these issues have come under fiercest debate of late (perhaps because American historians of slavery have come to the study of "process" so recently). As has now become clear, many of the canonical works on U.S. slavery and slave communities – e.g., Blassingame 1972, Genovese 1974, Rawick 1972 – treated the "peculiar institution" largely synchronically, basing their interpretations almost exclusively on the seductively rich nineteenth-century, antebellum record. During the past several years, however, a virtual flood of historical works has been devoted to the uneven and regionally-variable *development* of North American slavery, and much of that debate has turned on changing aspects of the slaves' cultural life. The following sorts of (formerly anthropological) questions are now being asked with increasing frequency by American historians: How "ethnically" homogeneous (or heterogeneous) were the enslaved Africans arriving in particular localities and what were the cultural consequences? What were the processes by which these Africans became African Americans? How quickly and in what ways did Africans transported to the Americas as slaves, and their African American offspring, begin thinking and acting as members of new communities – that is, how rapid was creolization? In what ways did the African arrivants choose to – and were they able to – continue particular ways of thinking and of doing things that came from the Old World? How did the various demographic profiles and social conditions of New World plantations in particular places and times encourage or inhibit these processes? Even a cursory glance at such much-discussed works as Ira Berlin's *Many Thousands Gone*, Michael Gomez's *Exchanging Our Country Marks*, Philip Morgan's *Slave Counterpoint*, or John Thornton's *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* – all published within the past three years – shows how important, and contentious, these questions have suddenly become for practitioners of American history.

A second set of issues – arguably of less interest to historians proper – has surfaced most forcefully in an essay by Jamaican anthropologist David Scott (1991), who suggests that anthropologists studying Afro-America ought to turn their attention away from the futile and perhaps even morally suspect effort to represent or verify or corroborate "authentic Afro-American pasts" ("what really happened") and focus instead on how African Americans in various parts of the hemisphere envision and talk about and act in terms of their

2. I wish to make clear, at the outset, that I speak here only for myself. I have not discussed any aspect of this paper with Mintz.

pasts.³ Our focus, he argues, should be on “tradition” – the ways that African Americans employ, for example, “Africa,” “slavery,” or “the Middle Passage” “in the narrative construction of relations among pasts, presents, and futures” (Scott 1991:278). “What space,” he says we should be asking, “do Africa and slavery occupy in the political economy of local discourse?” (Scott 1991:279). In short, we should focus on “discourse” and the realities it creates rather than engage in futile attempts to reconstruct “event.” Throughout his essay, Scott uses the work of Melville Herskovits and my own *First-Time* (1983a) as exemplars of two stages in what he views as a unitary anthropological quest. “Not surprisingly,” he argues, Afro-American anthropology “manifests a deep, humanist inclination toward a story about continuities and embraces the earnest task of demonstrating the integrity and the intactness of the old in the new, and of the past in the present” (Scott 1991:262). And in this narrative, “Africa” and “slavery” form the points of reference. “In the discursive or narrative economy of this anthropological problematic, *slavery* and ‘*Africa*’ function as virtually interchangeable terms, or, to put it in another way, slavery in the work of Price comes to perform the same rhetorical-conceptual labor as Africa in the work of Herskovits” (Scott 1991:263). “Both” he continues, “turn on a distinctive attempt to place the ‘cultures’ of the ex-African/ex-slave in relation to what we might call an authentic past, that is, an anthropologically identifiable, ethnologically recoverable, and textually re-presentable past” (Scott 1991:263).⁴

Whatever Scott’s discomforts about this master narrative of continuity and the ideology he believes underlies it, there seems little doubt that historians of slavery, like Afro-Americanist anthropologists, have generally endorsed it. (Indeed, I would argue that it is a quintessentially *American* [U.S.] narrative,

3. Writing against “the ideological assumptions that serve to secure the seeming authority of such anthropological arguments regarding [Afro-American pasts],” Scott (1991:268) says “These ideological assumptions have to do with the kind of anthropological object that the Afro-American or the Afro-Caribbean (or anyway the New World Negro) has historically been constructed as. I would argue that at least one of the pervasive ideological assumptions through which this theoretical object has been constructed is that peoples of African descent in the New World require something like anthropology, a science of culture, to provide them with the foundational guarantee of an authentic past.”

4. It may be worth noting that in contrast to the recent attention given by card-carrying historians and anthropologists to the history of such debates in Afro-American studies, Afro-Americanist scholars in the discipline of cultural studies have tended to ignore the debates of the past fifty years, thus leaving the field rhetorically free for their own “discoveries.” Brackette Williams (1995:181, 188) makes the point in her trenchant critique of Paul Gilroy’s *Black Atlantic* (1993) when she urges attention to its silences. In this much-discussed book, she argues “we lack an intellectual connection with past efforts to understand processes of cultural production which are products and producers of trans-cultural,

arising in part from the specificities of North American racism, rather than a strictly anthropological one. Europeans, Africans, and South Americans – scholars and layman alike – have, with a few notable exceptions, been uninterested in the particular polemics under discussion here.⁵⁾

I would like to distinguish and explore two competing versions of what Scott sees as a single master narrative, for I believe that there remains a considerable and significant chasm between the Herskovitses' account of Saramaka pasts and that of the Prices, or between John Thornton's or Michael Gomez's account of the development of slave life in colonial North America and that of Ira Berlin or Philip Morgan. I would also insist, for present purposes, that these competing versions of this master narrative of continuity differ significantly – ideologically, methodologically, and theoretically. Later on, I will try to suggest how Scott's focus on discourse might be combined with an interest in more traditional history to generate an anthropological approach to Afro-American pasts that is at once robust, rigorous, and ideologically defensible.

The contemporary Version One of the master narrative of continuity is militantly Africa-centric, stressing the continuing role of African ethnicities in the Americas, and is often explicitly mounted against the arguments of the M&P essay. I take two recent works to be exemplary: Gomez 1998 and Thornton 1998a. But I would first set the stage with some snippets from a more programmatic piece by Paul Lovejoy (1997:1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 16), which captures the flavor of the discourse:

An "African-centric" perspective overcomes a fundamental flaw in the history of Africans in the Americas as analyzed by many historians of slavery, particularly those identifying with the "creolization" model articulated by Sidney Mintz and Richard Price ... The focus from Africa implies that not all of the enslaved who went to the Americas were thoroughly deracinated[,] as

pre-national, or extra-national conceptual and grounded unities ... Silenced are several generations of scholars from and students of the Caribbean and Latin America whose work speaks to the issues Gilroy raises throughout the *Black Atlantic*. With differing degrees of success, these scholars of varied hues have tried to understand processes of cultural production and identity formation in conceptual units spanning geographical spaces and overlapping economic regimes." And in a note, she makes clear she is referring to, among other works, the M&P essay. In a separate comment, Mintz (1998:128) opined, similarly, that "The recent fuss about Caribbean modernity and the Black Atlantic is just the wheel being rediscovered – C.L.R. James, among others, knew it long ago."

5. I believe that this is the main reason (besides its often-ungainly style) why the M&P essay, in contrast to *First-Time*, *Maroon Societies*, *The Convict and the Colonel*, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, *Enigma Variations*, and *Maroon Arts*, has never been published in translation, though it continues to find a steady course-book market in the United States.

the "creolization" model assumes ... The implications of these Africanist assumptions are in sharp contrast to those of the "creolization school," which implicitly denies the possibility of significant ongoing links, even if intermittent, between Africa and the diaspora ... The creole model assumes that African history did not cross the Atlantic because the enslaved population was too diverse in origins to sustain the continuities of history. Disjuncture is the key concept ... Because of this depersonalized background, only "deep-level cultural principles" survived the Atlantic crossing ... [According to the creolization model] Creolization resulted in the rapid assimilation of enslaved Africans to a "new" hybrid culture evolving in the Americas ... In rejecting Herskovits's preoccupation with "survivals," ... Mintz and Price and their proteges in effect subscribe to E. Franklin Frazier's view that the culture of the Americas was "new" ... For creolists ... "creole" inevitably meant the "Europeanization" of the oppressed slaves ... I would argue that the concept of creolization as usually applied is Eurocentric, emphasizing how African culture becomes subsumed and amalgamated under slavery into an "American" mold that reenforced the domination of people of European descent ... The Mintz-Price process of adaptation and invention in the Americas assumes the destruction of African cultures ... The focus on the Americas, which is explicit in theories of creolization, effectively neutralizes African history ... The perspective of the Americas as conceived by the creolization school often misrepresents Africa and indeed is ahistorical.

In my view, this currently-popular⁶ "African-centric" rhetoric unfortunately serves to polarize and inflame – by the creation of "schools," by the insistence on the superior perspective of Africanists, and by egregious distortions of the M&P "model" – distracting scholars and students from the properly historical challenges that confront us.

The story that Michael Gomez tells in *Exchanging Our Country Marks* (1998) follows in the cultural nationalist tradition of Sterling Stuckey's *Slave Culture* (1987) but is inflected by a far more detailed knowledge of Africa. The book's overarching claim is that "From the colonial to the antebellum periods, Africans gradually underwent a process whereby the basis of their self-concept changed from ethnicity to race" (Gomez 1998:242). But this anodyne assertion is complemented by countless anecdotes and examples intended to bolster the hypothesis that particular African ethnicities played a more determinant role – and for a much longer period – in the lives of American slaves than was previously thought. To cite a typical example: Gomez (1998:174) writes that

Anna Miller of Frogtown and Currytown, on the western limits of Savannah, also testified in the 1930s that several of the older workers on the Butler Island plantation spoke a "funny language." Tony William Delegal, more than one hundred years old at the time, could even sing an African song ... The fact that Delegal (a form of Senegal?) could remember these words is

6. Lorena Walsh (1998:2) goes so far as to point – I think with considerable exaggeration – to "an emerging orthodoxy that sees slaves as forming identifiable communities based on their ethnic or national pasts."

itself testimony that African languages were kept alive by the African-born and passed on to descendants in certain instances.⁷

Such anecdotes and examples are bolstered by what seem to me quite groundless (and usually unhistoricized and unregionalized) assertions. For example,

There exists sufficient evidence to demonstrate that many, if not most, Africans continued to speak their native language in North America ... there is no hard evidence to support the popular notion that newly arrived Africans of the same ethnicity or area of origin were separated. Rather, there is every reason to believe that they were kept together ... In the absence of information that would support intraethnic divisions as a general phenomenon, one can only posit the likelihood that captives from the same area were purchased and housed together ... At any one time prior to 1830, it is possible that from two-thirds to three-fourths of all African-born slaves either could not or did not speak recognizable English or French. This means that they were either speaking their native languages to one another or a version of English/French so Africanized as to be unintelligible to whites, or both ... The removal to the Maroon was an attempt to recreate Africa in the swamps and inner recesses of America, and as such would have entailed to some degree a reaffirmation of ethnicity ... In 1720, then, the slave community [in North America] was for all practical purposes African ... Throughout the colonial period, the vast majority of African-born slaves and their progeny continued to practice various African religions ... The development of African American society through 1830 was very much the product of contributions made by specific [African] ethnic groups. (Gomez 1998: 172, 173, 180, 184, 194, 246, 291)

It is worth noting that the challenges faced by the slaves, as Gomez (1998:14-15) depicts them, sound very much like those evoked by M&P – e.g.,

In the course of African-African American interaction, there were many items to be negotiated. Day-to-day concerns provided the framework for a great deal of the exchange. Women and men from both sides of the Atlantic would have necessarily discussed what were the best ways to nurse children and instill discipline, the proper care of the aged and infirm, the best fishing methods, and what constituted respectable behavior in the company of elders ... That is, black folk had to re-create their society, their collective inner life, drawing from any number of ethnic paradigms and informed by the present crisis.

But Gomez's understanding of how the slaves met these challenges differs radically from the M&P model, consistently emphasizing the persistence of (quasi-essentialized) African ethnicities. His detailed maps of West and Central Africa,

7. If such anecdotes prove anything, we might add that one of my Russian-born grandmothers taught me a song (and Sally's Swedish grandfather taught her a single phrase – "Do you like to fish?") each of which constitute the *only* words of their mother tongues they passed on directly, or via their children, to their American grandchildren.

with the putative destinations of various African ethnicities in North America, beg exactly those questions I think historians should be exploring with as open a mind as possible. For me, the organization of Gomez's book – with central chapters devoted to the fate in the Americas, first of people from Senegambia and the Bight of Benin, then of Islamicized Africans, next of Sierra Leoneans and the Akan, and finally of Igbos and West Central Africans – constitutes a hypothesis that remains both unproven and, in many cases (some of which should be clear from the citations above), entirely counterfactual. Where, in my view, Gomez is at his best is in maintaining an emphasis on the importance of hegemony and subjugation – and resistance – as he explores the development of African American culture, and in reminding us that African Americans often “engaged in polycultural rather than syncretic life-styles” (Gomez 1998:10).

John Thornton in *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800* reiterates the plea for a specifically Africanist perspective on the playing out of ethnicity in particular places and periods in the Americas. Nevertheless, his materials seem to me to be far more convincing regarding Africa – particularly West Central Africa – than the Americas. (Indeed, the first edition of his book broke new ground in demonstrating the pervasiveness and significance of movements of people and ideas, of exchanges between cultures, and of various kinds of syncretisms and creolizations – sometimes involving European invaders and traders and sometimes not – within Africa itself.) Once he turns to the Americas, however, Thornton (1998a:184) begins to write explicitly against the M&P model, claiming that it depicts “the resulting mixture” as “distinctly European and European-oriented, with the African elements giving it flavor rather than substance.” And on the crucial question of the cultural heterogeneity of Africans imported into the New World, while Thornton (1998a:184, 187) notes that “on the whole, modern research has tended to side with Mintz and Price, who argue that there were major differences among the cultures of the Atlantic coast of Africa,” he tries to show that this represents an exaggeration and that Africans were “not nearly so diverse as to create the kind of cultural confusion posited by those who see African diversity as a barrier to the development of an African-based American culture.” (Needless to say, neither Mintz nor Price has ever imagined that there was “cultural confusion,” nor has either ever seen diversity as a “barrier.” Rather – and here I speak explicitly for myself – I have consistently presented African cultural diversity as *an encouragement to inter-African syncretism and creolization*.) Thornton (1998a:199, 204) further claims that on large plantations in the Americas, “slaves would typically have no trouble finding members of their own nation with whom to communicate” and that “the slave trade and subsequent transfer to New World plantations was not, therefore, quite as randomizing a process as posited by those who argue that Africans had to start from scratch culturally upon their arrival in the New World.” I would note that the idea of Afro-Americans “starting from scratch” is not a position anyone has endorsed for

decades, despite Lovejoy's claim (cited above) that "Mintz and Price and their proteges in effect subscribe to E. Franklin Frazier's view that the culture of the Americas was 'new'."

In Thornton's version of the Big Picture, Africa consistently reigns triumphant. For example, he writes that

On the eve of the revolution in Saint-Domingue, Kikongo was also, in all likelihood, the most commonly spoken first language, or was a close runner-up to French. In fact, the creole leaders of the revolution in 1791 complained that most of their followers could "scarcely make out two words of French." (Thornton 1998a:321)

But from an Americanist perspective, it might be useful to signal that these people's speech options were not simply an African mother tongue or French. Indeed, these Haitians would in great majority have been speaking to each other in *their own shared language* – neither Kikongo nor French – but a new language that they (and the generations of enslaved Africans and their descendants who preceded them) had created in Saint-Domingue: Haitian Creole.⁸

I would note the tendency for proponents of the Africa-centric position to systematically ignore the mass of contrary data that continues to accumulate across the Americas (including work by Sally and me on rapid creolization in Suriname). It was with great eagerness that I awaited the publication of the revised edition of Thornton's *Africa and Africans*, the first edition of which ended in 1680 – that is, just before the founding of Suriname's Maroon communities. Since the second edition promised to bring things up to 1800, I had it Fedexed from the United States to Brazil, where I was teaching for the semester. But as the French say, *Quelle déception!* Not a word (not even a typo) is changed or revised in the first ten chapters. And the new, final eighteenth-century chapter devotes but a single paragraph to the Suriname Maroons (whose early history and cultural development is now as carefully documented as perhaps any society in Afro-America, and who by themselves constitute such a powerful counter-example to Thornton's generalizations) and that paragraph is based on a single source – an article by a Dutch lecturer in anthropology who had never done fieldwork among Maroons.

Surely this sort of motivated erasure of countervailing scholarship is as unfortunate as it is unnecessary.⁹ The two camps purport to share the same intel-

8. Thornton's consistent use of the phrase "the colonial language" (which he opposes to various African languages) throughout his new, eighteenth-century chapter exposes his *parti-pris*. In his account, creole languages – which in most territories at most times were the most widely used means of communication among slaves – scarcely exist.

9. I should add that none of this is, to my knowledge, in any way personal – the opposing scholars hardly know one another and have no private grudges known to me. Which makes it all the more interesting intellectually.

lectual goals. We would seem to be in the presence of a (pseudo)debate based to some extent on careerism (a rivalry between Africanists and Americanists and, sometimes, between historians and anthropologists), but more importantly on underlying ideologies or *partis-pris* (which have barely been acknowledged and certainly not yet analyzed in print). As Trouillot (1998:8-9) remarks dryly:

Theories of creolization or of creole societies, assessments of what it means to be "creole" in turn, are still very much affected by the ideological and political sensibilities of the observers ... All seize creolization as a totality, thus one level too removed from the concrete circumstances faced by the individuals engaged in the process. All these models invoke history ... Yet the historical conditions of cultural production rarely become a fundamental and necessary part of the descriptions or analyses that these models generate. Calls for a more refined look at historical particulars [and here he points in a footnote to the M&P essay] remain unheeded.¹⁰

The M&P essay tried first and foremost to propose an *approach* for studying the African American past (indeed this was explicit in its original title: *An Anthropological Approach to the Afro-American Past*). For the study of slavery across the Americas, it tried to lay out the kinds of constants (e.g., the realities of power differences) and the kinds of variables (e.g., demographic, cultural, geographic) that merited scholars' attention. It assumed that, despite certain commonalities based on relations of power, slavery in nineteenth-century Virginia, for example, was in significant ways a different institution from slavery in seventeenth-century Mexico or slavery in eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue, and it tried to point to the kinds of processes that brought about these differences. The clarion call of the M&P essay was historicization and contextualization – the same careful exploration of sociohistorical particulars that Mintz (1971) had first called for in the study of creole languages in the 1960s. Yet, in arguing its brief, the M&P essay seems to have given the impression to some readers that processes of creolization that were relatively smooth and rapid and irreversible were necessarily the norm throughout the Americas. That is, it may, at times, have gone farther in suggesting a model of "what really happened" (as opposed to a *methodological* model) than its authors intended. And here, I would suggest, my own then-recent Saramaka experience may be partly to blame.

10. Stephan Palmié (1997) makes similar observations about the misuse or misreading of the M&P essay: "Despite its theoretical sophistication and methodological soundness, the 'rapid early synthesis' model suggested by Mintz and Price fell short of stimulating a thorough historicization of African-American anthropology. Instead, and quite contrary to these authors' intentions, it sometimes seems to have encouraged hypostatizing the concept of creolization to a degree where it allows glossing over history."

David Scott has suggested that both Herskovits and I “found” our models for Afro-American anthropology among the Saramaka (who he says have thus become “a sort of anthropological metonym ... providing the exemplary arena in which to argue out certain anthropological claims about a discursive domain called Afro-America” [Scott 1991:269]). This seems off base insofar as it implies the conscious, prior intent of the ethnographer – setting out to find what he wishes to demonstrate. Melville Herskovits, according to his wife and sometime co-author Frances, was absolutely bowled over and *surprised* by what he saw (“Africa!”) in the Suriname bush – “nearly all of sub-Saharan Africa [was] represented, from what is now Mali to Loango and into the Congo – and the Loango chief who came to our base camp [in Saramaka] invoked both the Great God of the Akan of the Gold Coast, *Nyankompon*, and the Bantu *Zambi*” (Herskovits 1969:vii-viii). And I was equally, *and equally unexpectedly*, affected by the importance of “first-time” (resistance-to-slavery) discourse in present-day Saramaka life. But insofar as Scott is underlining that the anthropologist is a product of his time and place and (dare I say?) subject position, and that Africa was very much in the air in 1920s Harlem-renaissanced New York City, just as resistance (to slavery and other more current oppressions) was very much in the air (as was tear-gas) in 1960s Cambridge and New Haven (Bobby Seale and the Panthers were on trial a few blocks away from my first day of teaching at Yale), he’s undoubtedly on to something. While collaborating on the M&P essay, I had my recent Saramaka experiences very much in mind and much of my contribution to that work must have been shaped by them. And the fact that the ancestors of modern Saramakas – because of the specificities of their historical situation – forged their society via more rapid, smoother creolization processes than did African arrivants in some parts of the Americas may well have skewed the summary sketch we gave. Which is why it remains crucial to separate out the methodological model, which I believe still has quite general relevance, from the particular examples we presented (which, today, could be very much expanded, on the basis of all that scholars have learned in the intervening twenty-five years).¹¹

11. By trying to heed the Saramaka proverb, “Lizard says: ‘Speed is good, but so is caution’,” and thus achieve some balance, I may protest too much in this paragraph. Two readers of this paper – Phil Morgan and Rolph Trouillot – while agreeing that the thrust of M&P is surely methodological (an “approach to”) both urged me (in RT’s words) “not to give up the central point of the speed issue,” though of course “to leave room for decreolization, recreolization, or other processes, which is another matter” and (in PM’s words) “to hold on to the early creolization model and not give too much ground on that score ... I would guess early creolization applies in most places.” This may be the place to acknowledge explicitly the influence of the late Dutch missionary-linguist Jan Voorhoeve on the notion of early creolization used in the M&P essay, since a major reassessment of his work has recently appeared (Meel 1997).

As Trouillot suggests, we must continue to insist on historical particulars.¹² And when Thornton and other Africa-centric historians move from the Big Picture (where “ideological preferences” drive their narrative) to “the concrete circumstances faced by the individuals engaged in the process” of creolization, they often provide provocative insights and raise important problems for further study.¹³ For example, Thornton’s explorations of the role of Kongo-born slaves among participants in the 1739 Stono Rebellion (1991)

12. This is very much the tenor of Sally’s and my most recent visit to this general issue, in a footnote to our latest book (S. and R. Price 1999:329-30), where we note that “Monica Schuler has taken R.P. to task for (over)emphasizing the rapidity of creolization and has, in contrast, stressed what she sees as the continuing importance of African ethnic solidarity (Schuler 1970, 1979, 1980; see also Karasch 1979). Some scholars have claimed that planters in some colonies at some moments encouraged the maintenance of African ethnic solidarity as a means of control, while others have pointed to widely documented planters’ practices of separating slaves of a particular ethnic origin for the same purpose (see, for references, R. Price 1979:142). R.P. has cautioned that ‘such statements, which originate in data from particular societies at particular historical moments, can be converted into generalizations only at the risk of obscuring the very variation that is crucial to understanding the nature of New World slavery’ (ibid.:143).” We go on to suggest that Roger Bastide, working with Brazilian materials, espoused a perspective that dissolves many of these difficulties. “We know little about Afro-Brazilian religions in those distant times,” wrote Bastide (1978:47-48), “but we should certainly give up the notion of [African] cult centers surviving through centuries down to the present day ... and think rather of a chaotic proliferation of cults or cult fragments arising only to die out and give way to others with every new wave of [African] arrivals. The *candomblés*, *xangôs* and *batuques* of today are not survivals of ancient sects reaching back into the Brazilian past but relatively recent organizations ... We should therefore think of the religious life of Africans in Brazil as a series of events lacking any organic links – traditions that were broken and resumed but that nevertheless retained from one century to the next ... the same fidelity to the African mystique or mystiques.” And J. Lorand Matory’s (2001) recent research on Bahian Candomblé and on Yoruba religion lends considerable muscle to Bastide’s assertions. Finally, we express our sympathy with Edward Kamau Brathwaite’s poetic and imaginative critique of Monica Schuler’s attempt to specify Jamaican *myal* as a solar, “Kongo” retention. “It may,” writes Brathwaite (1979:152, *et passim*), “have been so in Central Africa, but in Jamaica it was (and is) a fragment or aspect of a larger creolised form which includes *obiah*, *jonkonnu*, and *kumina/pukumina*, ‘convince,’ *congo* and *ettu*.”

13. There exists a substantial bibliography of works emphasizing the cultural contributions of specific African ethnicities to one or another New World colony. Among the more interesting I would cite: Schuler 1980, Littlefield 1981, Karasch 1987, Hall 1992, Reis 1993, Palmer 1995, Chambers 1996, and Walsh 1997.

and the Haitian Revolution (1993) open intriguing new perspectives.¹⁴ It would appear that the more specific (limited in time and space) the Africa-centric study of American phenomena, the better its chances of being historically persuasive. An article by historian-of-the-Gold-Coast Ray Kea (1996) about an eighteenth-century slave rebellion in the Danish West Indies is a case in point: he is able to tease out the consequences of the "Amina" backgrounds of the slaves involved with considerable subtlety, helping us imagine something of the mindset (ideologies, notions about authority, ideas about death) held by people being shipped out of a particular port at a particular time because of particular local circumstances in Africa, and describe some of how these played themselves out in a specific event in the New World. In short, there is little doubt that such an Africanist perspective has its place in our toolkit for understanding the ways enslaved Africans and their descendants created communities and institutions in their new homes. If used in the service of greater contextualization and historicization, rather than to promote a generalizing, creolization-bashing *parti-pris*, such perspectives, informed by rich knowledge of African history, cannot but add to our understandings of events on this side of the Atlantic.

Returning to the Big Picture – the master narrative of continuity – we might sum up Version One as a militantly Africa-centric contemporary successor to the narrative of African survivals crafted by Herskovits in the 1920s and 1930s, and embellished by Robert Farris Thompson in the 1970s and 1980s. Compatible with African American cultural nationalist positions, it stresses the staying power of African ethnicities and plays down processes of creolization or blending.

Version Two, as expressed by contemporary American historians, grows out of scholars' deep knowledge of New World as opposed to African realities, and is therefore richer in its historical texture regarding slavery. It is fully compatible with the project of the M&P essay as well as with other roughly contemporaneous writings that stressed New World creativity, blending, and creolization, such as Bastide (1978), Joyner (1984), or Levine (1977). For

14. More recently, Thornton (1998b) has suggested an Africanist perspective as a more general research strategy, though the two case studies he presents in support – one from early eighteenth-century Kongo and the other from nearly contemporaneous Dahomey – however rich in their African texture, in fact tell us little about the consequences of the specific African events for the New World communities in which the expelled slaves landed. Years ago, I wrote an extended critique of (it so happens) a Kongo-centric approach to the study of Saramaccan lexicon (R. Price 1975), trying to suggest some of the dangers within – dangers which I believe are not entirely absent even from the more sophisticated recent Africa-centric works.

present purposes, we may take recent works by Ira Berlin and by Philip Morgan as exemplary.¹⁵ In each, the starting point is systematic comparison (among regions and through time) and the complexity of cultural development is highlighted.

Berlin (1998:3) opens his book with the credo that "understanding that a person was a slave is not the end of the story but the beginning, for the slaves' history was derived from experiences that differed from place to place and time to time and not from some unchanging transhistorical verity." And he generalizes shortly thereafter, that "Rather than proceed from African to creole or from slavery to freedom, people of African descent in mainland North America crossed the lines between African and creole and between slavery and freedom many times, and not always in the same direction" (Berlin 1998:5).

Berlin's developmental model of North American slavery begins with the charter generation – the first slaves off the ships, who in no way fit the time-worn stereotypes of salt-water Africans. In the Chesapeake region, for example, "although some of the new arrivals hailed directly from Africa, most had already spent some time in the New World, understood the languages of the Atlantic, bore Hispanic and occasionally English names, and were familiar with Christianity and other aspects of European culture" (Berlin 1998:29). In Florida, the equivalent charter generation of "Atlantic creoles" managed to survive into the late eighteenth century, while in the South Carolina Low-country the charter generation was much more quickly swamped by new Africans imported to labor on the great rice plantations that sprang up at the end of the seventeenth. Meanwhile, Berlin (1998:77) argues, Louisiana witnessed a different (more Caribbean-like) progression, a smoother and more unidirectional passage from African to Creole but also a passage from being a "slave society" to becoming "a society with slaves."¹⁶ Overall in Berlin's North America, slavery and race were being constantly constructed and reconstructed according to changing historical circumstance.

Berlin's description of the dramatic reaffricanization (and subsequent re-creolization) of the Chesapeake contrasts with the picture drawn by Gomez or Thornton. In describing how, under the new harsh tobacco regime, "African slaves and their descendants, sometimes in league with remnants of the charter generations, began to reshape black life," Berlin (1998:114) insists that

15. At the time of the School of American Research seminar (April 1999), these two books had only recently been published. By the time of this article's submission (September 2000), they had already garnered, between them, more than a dozen major book prizes.

16. In another context, I might argue with some of the particular trajectories Berlin posits for his various regions, e.g., the Lower Mississippi Valley. But his general stress on variation and uneven development nevertheless seems cardinal.

"Through the entire period [of reaficanization], the majority came from ports as distant from one another as Senegambia and Angola." And after discussing where slaves came from, how they arrived and were sold, and where they ended up, during this period of intense reaficanization, he summarizes: "Thus the slave trade in the Chesapeake operated to scatter men and women of various nations and diminish the importance of African nationality" (Berlin 1998:115). The "African moment" ended by the fourth decade of the eighteenth century, when Chesapeake life was once again transformed "as a new generation of African Americans eclipsed the African majority, ending the era of African domination ... The Chesapeake once again became a creole society ... The African moment in Chesapeake history was passing, as the African population aged and the rising generation of African Americans came into its own" (Berlin 1998:126-28).

In short, for this one region – and Berlin takes us through similar changes for other parts of North America – we get a picture of immense variation in which African ethnicity plays a role only selectively, in both time and space, and in which creolization – though rarely discussed explicitly in this book, which focuses more on results than process – is an ever-present motor of development and change.

Berlin's book makes clear how foolhardy it would be to base a general model of the development of slave culture on Lowcountry South Carolina in the early eighteenth century (where, in Thornton's fine phrase [1998a:320], "African culture was not surviving – it was arriving"), on the Chesapeake during the Revolutionary era, or on early nineteenth-century Louisiana (or, for that matter, on seventeenth/eighteenth-century Saramaka). The historical particulars *matter*, and the pace and rhythm and nature of creolization differed. But the methodological and theoretical assumptions matter too. Berlin's understanding of ethnicity (like Morgan's, see below) strikes me as sensitive and theoretically-informed, and comes much closer to that shared by most anthropologists than does that of Gomez, Thornton, or the other Africa-centrists. Berlin (1998:103-5) points to the absence of an idea of "Africa," and the ultimate flexibility of ethnicities, in the minds of the recently enslaved:

Africa housed hundreds, perhaps thousands, of different "nations" ... The language, religion, domestic organization, aesthetics, political sensibilities, and military traditions that Africans carried from the interior to the plantations cannot be understood in their generality but only in their particulars, for the enslaved peoples were not Africans but Akan, Bambara, Fon, Igbo, or Mande ... New identities [in the Americas] took a variety of forms ... Competition, as well as cooperation, within the quarter compounded the remnants of ancient enmities, giving nationality or ethnicity an ever-changing reality and with it new meanings to Akan, Bambara, and Fon identity. In this changing world, nationality or ethnicity did not rest upon some primordial communal solidarity, cultural attribute, or common experience, for

these qualities could be adopted or discarded at will. In the Americas, men and women identified as Angolans, Igbos, or Males frequently gained such identities not from their actual birthplace or the place from which they disembarked but because they spoke, gestured, and behaved like – or associated with – Angolans, Igbos, or Males ... For most Africans, as for their white counterparts, identity was a garment which might be worn or discarded ... Choice, as well as imposition or birthright, determined who the new arrivals would be ... In short, identity formation for African slaves was neither automatic nor unreflective, neither uniform nor unilinear.¹⁷

If Berlin's book paints the Big Comparative Picture for North America, Philip Morgan's equally ambitious *Slave Counterpoint* focuses more single-mindedly on the development of slave culture itself.¹⁸ Unlike Berlin's book, which is organized by a regional and chronological grid, Morgan's is organized by institutions (viewed through time), examining material life, work in the fields, skilled labor, exchanges between whites and blacks, family life, and so forth. Morgan (1998:95) synthesizes a remarkable amount of data in comparing cultural developments in the Chesapeake and in the Lowcountry, beginning with the demographic givens: Creoles formed a majority in Virginia by 1720 (and by 1780, 95 percent of Virginia slaves were Creoles), while in South Carolina

17. Paralleling this position from an African perspective, Appiah (1992:177-78) has written eloquently on the historically contingent nature of ethnic identities – part of the reason why the idea of establishing an African “baseline” for New World studies has been so fraught with problems. He cites Chinua Achebe's remarks about the relative recency of the “Igbo” identity in Nigeria: “For instance, take the Igbo people. In my area, historically, they did not see themselves as Igbo. They saw themselves as people from this village or that village ... And yet, after the experience of the Biafran War, during a period of two years, it became a very powerful consciousness.” And then he cautions that “Recognizing Igbo identity as a new thing is not a way of privileging other Nigerian identities: each of the three central ethnic identities of modern political life – Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo – is a product of the rough-and-tumble of the transition through colonial to postcolonial status. David Laitin has pointed out that ‘the idea that there was a single Hausa-Fulani tribe ... was largely a political claim of the NPC [Northern Peoples' Congress] in their battle against the South,’ while ‘many elders intimately involved in rural Yoruba society today recall that, as late as the 1930s, “Yoruba” was not a common form of political identification.’ ... Modern Ghana witnesses the development of an Akan identity, as speakers of the three major regional dialects of Twi – Asante, Fante, Akuapem – organize themselves into a corporation against an (equally novel) Ewe unity ... Identities are complex and multiple and grow out of a history of changing responses to economic, political, and cultural forces, almost always in opposition to other identities.”

18. Growing in part out of the same intellectual milieu as the M&P essay – the Johns Hopkins Program in Atlantic History and Culture of the 1970s and 1980s – Morgan's book could be read (though of course it is much more than this) as the most detailed implementation of the general M&P project yet attempted for North America. Indeed, it uses language of a strikingly similar kind in discussing a range of cultural issues throughout its more than 700 pages (see for example, pp. xxii, 257, 261, 442, 559, 580, *et passim*).

the African-born held a majority till mid-century, with Creoles making up a two-thirds majority by 1780. Morgan treats African ethnicity as important at certain moments but as a variable that faded relatively quickly, in terms of the slaves' identity politics, both because of rapid creolization and because of the growth of widespread race-consciousness in the later eighteenth century. "In the Chesapeake, creoles were a majority on most plantations and neighborhoods by the early eighteenth century; they set the tone and tenor of slave life in the region remarkably early. Africans learned the ropes from them ... The lessons largely flowed from creoles to Africans" (Morgan 1998:460-61). Though Lowcountry developments were different in detail – "In Charleston, even the most sophisticated creole slaves lived cheek by jowl with Africans" – "in the long run, however, Africans, even in the Lowcountry, were aliens in a strange land" (Morgan 1998:461, 456). Indeed Morgan (1998:457) ultimately views ethnicity, as well as other aspects of African culture, mainly as "a resource on which ... slaves could draw" in forging a new African American culture. And his detailed discussion of the development of slave religion in North America likewise draws on M&P-like assumptions:

The religion of slaves in eighteenth-century British America highlights how blacks, laboring under extreme hardships and in radically different settings, managed to preserve some deep-level principles drawn from their African heritage. Much was lost: few priests and almost no collective rituals survived the passage ... [But] at the fundamental level of epistemological beliefs, interpersonal relations, and expressive behavior, slaves kept alive a measure of their African 'character.' They engaged in a process of selective appropriation or structured improvisation in which values and practices were reinterpreted as they were incorporated. (Morgan 1998:657-58)¹⁹

That Morgan (and Berlin) draw on many of the same sources (and often the same quotations) as Gomez only serves to highlight the extent to which their interpretations of "what really happened" contrast. Morgan has Africans "learning the ropes" from Creoles, Gomez has second- and even third-generation African Americans being "dominated" by first-generation and "native" Africans. In one of the more bizarre twists to this debate, a recent book by Lorena Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove* seems to be read almost like

19. Contrast these passages with the following ones from Gomez (1998:194) (parts already quoted above): "In 1720, then, the slave community [in North America] was for all practical purposes African. The American-born constituent was present, and continued to grow from 1740 to 1760 ... However, many of these were first-generation Americans, so that they would have fallen under the enculturative provenance of African parentage. The combination of these first-generation blacks and a native African population resulted in their domination of second- and third-generation African Americans."

a Rorschach test by the various players. A review in the *William & Mary Quarterly* states that

the most important issue that Walsh discusses involves the ways enslaved Africans became Afro-Virginians, processes outlined in the pioneering work of anthropologists Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price. Walsh's portrayal fits their creolization model, as new Africans and creole slaves forged a syncretic culture during the eighteenth century ... Historians of early American slave communities have been reevaluating the Mintz-Price model for understanding the emergence of African-American communities under slavery. Some insist that, contrary to the model, early slave communities retained ethnically specific African cultures ... Walsh's work suggests that even in conditions that were, by Virginia's standards, ideal for testing this revisionist position – Carter's Grove contained many slaves who shared a regional African heritage – creolization proceeded rapidly. (Sidbury 1998:631-33)

And Berlin (1998:410) draws similar conclusions from Walsh's book:

A close analysis of the holding of a single planter family over more than a century [Walsh 1997] reveals how, even when slaves derived from a single catchment area, changes in the slave trade over time, the entry of small groups from other parts of Africa, and the internal sale and movement of slaves prevented the direct transfer of any single African nation or culture to the Americas.

Nonetheless, Walsh herself appears to resist these conclusions at any cost. In a recent overview of the role of African ethnicity in North America, drawing heavily on the data from her book, she criticizes Morgan (for such statements as "The homogenizing tendency of stressing cultural unity in Africa, of emphasizing the non-random character of the slave trade, and of seeing the dominance of particular African coastal regions or ethnicities in most American settings, is at variance with the central forces shaping the early modern Atlantic world" [1997:142]) and lauds Gomez (for such statements as "A more informed discussion of the role of ethnicity can only further elucidate an examination of acculturation" [1998:9]). It is hard to escape the conclusion that ideology and politics – the specificities of North American identity politics – continue to direct the master narratives, as well as to influence how they are read (see Mintz & Price 1992:xiii-xiv; Gates 1998).

Perhaps, as Trouillot (1998:20) suggests, it is simply too early to generalize about creolization – "we have not thought enough about what went on in specific places and times to produce a framework sensitive enough to time, place, and power." But the North American cases we have examined here suggest we may need more than increased knowledge about sociohistorical particulars. In anthropology, the classic cases of rival interpretations involve restudies (from Redfield vs Lewis on Tepoztlan to Mead vs Freeman on

Samoa), where changes resulting from the lapse of several decades of change-on-the-ground are not always easy to separate out from paradigm shifts in the discipline or differences due to the ethnographers' skills and personality. What is striking in the current North American slavery debates is that we have scholars writing simultaneously, using much the same data – and often citing the exact same primary sources – coming to opposing conclusions. Perhaps in the present case, the players simply need to continue to duke it out in public and in their publications, in the hope that Truth and Reason will emerge victorious ...

As one who, in the wake of Herskovits and Mintz, has always argued for a pan-Afro-American perspective (see, for example, R. Price 1996), I would advocate here also the need for broader comparison, both across Afro-America and across disciplines, as a way of nudging these debates beyond particular ideological battlegrounds. (American historians seem even more parochial in these respects than their colleagues abroad.) For surely, similar general processes of culture-building were at work everywhere. To cite but two examples of the kind of work that might help bring peace to the protean wars of the North American historians: In an erudite book that recently crossed my desk, "*Chi ma nkongo*": *Lengua y rito ancestrales en El Palenque de San Basilio (Colombia)*, Armin Schwegler demonstrates, first, that songs sung at the most apparently African of all Palenquero rites, the *lumbalú*, are (in the words of one reviewer) "not the partially decreolized outcome of original African songs, but rather are essentially modern [that is, eighteenth-century or nineteenth-century] creations, based on a combination of regional Spanish and Palenquero [the local creole language], to which African and pseudo-African words and onomatopoeic elements have been added," and second "that the active use of spoken African languages in Palenque disappeared very early, if in fact the population ever used an African language as the primary means of communication" (Lipski 1998:357). (This second point about the early development and predominance of a creole language is especially interesting in that Schwegler is able to show that the Africans who founded Palenque were characterized by a relative linguistic homogeneity, with Bantu languages, particularly ki-Kongo, providing the main substratum for the new creole.) In his recent review of this book, Lipski (1998:359-60) calls it "at once a masterful analysis of the elusive *lumbalú* language and a major breakthrough in Afro-creole analyses ... a benchmark against which future analyses of creole languages and cultures will be measured."

More generally, how can we best encourage our students, and each other, to read and react to such work – in this case, an expensive two-volume work published in Germany, written in Spanish, and about a black community in the hinterlands of Colombia, but one which has crucial lessons to teach every one of us interested in questions of "Africanisms" and African ethnicity in the Americas, whether in Tidewater Virginia or Bahia? Or again, I recently had

the privilege of reading in manuscript Randy Matory's historical study – *Man in the "City of Women"* which brilliantly analyzes the ideological role of African ethnicity, and the ongoing creation and redefinition of African ethnicities in Bahia. My own strong feeling is that we must follow such leads and get on with the work of historical interpretation, leaving the posturing to others. In my view – which on this issue has not budged since the M&P essay – African ethnicity remains *one* (among many) of the ways enslaved peoples brought to the New World thought about (and in some parts of the Americas, continue to think about) themselves, and it played varied roles in different aspects of life for varying periods in different places in the New World.

Perhaps the most thoughtful and up-to-date summary of this position may be found in an article by Philip Morgan (1997), in which he draws on the latest data about the Atlantic slave trade to consider the overall cultural implications for New World societies. And for some very important recent materials from the African side, which afford detailed support to this position, see now the work of David Northrup (2000; forthcoming).

As noted earlier, David Scott (1991:278) has suggested a reorientation of Afro-American anthropology away from "this sustained preoccupation [which he finds in the work of Herskovits and Price] with the corroboration or verification of authentic pasts" and toward "discourse" – "Between that event (Africa or slavery) and this memory," he writes, "there spreads a complex discursive field we may usefully call 'tradition'." As I read it, Scott's radical critique would deny the primary object of historical study – pasts that exist independent of a cultural imagining of them. But I am not enough of a post-modernist – or so afraid of essentializing – to be willing to discard, say, the facts of eighteenth-century demography or colonial statutes or accounts of tortures meted out to recaptured Maroons. For all these, I believe, have *effects*, and not just on discourse or tradition, in the present. I submit that we should embrace the written and oral and artifactual traces left us by the past in all their epistemological complications (and fully accepting their constructedness) and then do our level best to re-present them honestly. Saramakas are more than an "anthropological metonym ... providing the exemplary arena in which to argue out certain anthropological claims" (Scott 1991:269). They are at once socially and politically marginalized African Americans who have heroic Maroon traditions, who have against all odds created a vibrant culture, and whose lives (and way of life) are as threatened today as they have been at any moment since the end of the colonial wars two and a half centuries ago. Sally and I feel a deep responsibility, as anthropologists and friends, to help Saramakas tell their story, in part as a means of self-defense against severe ongoing repression (see R. Price 1995, 1998b).

The agenda of *First-Time* was multiple, and not all of its aims fit together smoothly. Like any ambitious work, it tried to address several quite differ-

ent concerns that were in the air at the time of its composition. One of its targets was skeptical historians, those powerful traditionalists in every university who continued to deny the possibility that "primitive peoples" – particularly those without writing – could have a sense of their own past that transcended "myth." My book, like that of my undergraduate- and graduate-school buddy Renato Rosaldo on the Ilongots of the Philippines (1980), was in part intended to give historians (and some anthropologists, including Sahlins and Lévi-Strauss) a wake-up call on this hoary issue. A related concern, more resolutely Herskovitsian in nature, was to demonstrate that these particular African Americans did have a past – the project that Scott is more directly concerned about. (Here the aim was double – showing not only that there were, among Saramakas, historians who behaved, despite cultural differences, rather like our own, but also that their collective vision of the Saramaka past could be fruitfully compared to more traditional records constructed by non-Saramakas.) A third goal of *First-Time* was purely documentary – to present, and thus preserve for posterity, "the historical vision" of the Saramaka Maroons (generalized in the book's subtitle to "an Afro-American people" in order, if memory serves, to try to appeal to a wider-than-anthropological audience).²⁰

In addition to these concerns, *First-Time* tried to focus attention on the dialectic between event and memory, in the belief that Afro-Americanist anthropologists must ultimately figure out how to analyze and represent *both*. Scott (1991:67-68) suggests that *First-Time*'s "bold and innovative ethnographic strategy" is plausible "only ... insofar as we accept the conceptual premise that pasts are preservable and representable" and he chooses to "differ with what appears to be Price's view, namely that both the oral testimony of his Saramaka informants and the written texts of the Dutch colonizers are culturally different, yet conceptually uncomplicated ways of re-presenting the past in the present." Perhaps because it is not my style to wear my theoretical assumptions on my authorial sleeve, I am probably partly responsible for Scott's misunderstanding of my views here. So, I would like to put on record that *First-Time* takes off from the credo that both ethnographic truths and historical truths are always *partial* truths – as Jim Clifford (1986) quickly understood.²¹ And (again, *pace* Scott) I begin with the assumption that both oral

20. In a reading very much of its time and place, Scott seems to suggest that the fact that Saramaka Maroons represent, particularly from a North American perspective, a relatively noble response to slavery, makes them (and their ethnographers) somehow suspect. Such reasoning meshes with the "demotion" of the figure of the once-heroic (literary) Maroon by the contemporary Martiniquan *créolité* movement (see R. & S. Price 1997) and would seem to be part of a more general postcolonial Caribbean intellectual move.

21. "*First Time*," Clifford (1986:7) writes, "offers a good example of self-conscious, serious partiality ... evidence of the fact that acute political and epistemological self-con-

testimony and archival documents are enormously complicated conceptually. From this perspective, my aim in *First-Time* was not to corroborate contemporary Saramaka memories by using eighteenth-century archives but to show how (and, in many cases, why), modern Saramaka discourse, on the one hand, and colonial Dutch documents, on the other, each constitute partial truths – that is, I tried always to keep in mind the relevant political, ideological, and other influences on the selection, transmission, and silencing of the past – the production of history – in each case. Such a strategy poses severe representational challenges, which is why *First-Time* assumes its unusual organization and page layout. And it is also why I do not discuss at greater length the political, ideological, and other considerations that shape the Saramaka discourse I present in the book (though I do offer examples of how these work themselves out) – that is, I explicitly choose not to overwhelm the reader with local clan and personal names and the detailed history of internal political disputes. Nor do I rehearse at length the complicated issues of the making of the Dutch archives and other written sources, which I cover more extensively in another book published the same year (1983b). In any case, my concerns about problematizing oral and written and ethnographic sources are, I believe, ever-present in *First-Time*, but I chose not to dwell overly on them, in order to achieve even that level of representational clarity I managed, in presenting quite foreign and complex cultural realities to an English-speaking audience.

I believe that rather than privileging discourse, which runs grave dangers, Afro-Americanists must embrace both discourse and event, figuring out imaginative representational strategies to handle them together. (Trouillot [1998:15] notes that “As social theory becomes more discourse-oriented, the distance between data and claims in debates about creolization ... increases. Historical circumstances fall further into a hazy background of ideological preferences.”) One strategy, which I used extensively in *First-Time*, is to hold both in mind but to treat them, alternatively, as figure and ground. Several of the essays in Trouillot’s *Silencing the Past* constitute admirable attempts to achieve similar ends for Haiti in the revolutionary period. *Alabi’s World* and, particularly, *The Convict and the Colonel* constitute other attempts of my own, adopting different representational strategies, toward the same ends. At the simplest level, I am arguing that in order to fully understand “discourse” (collective memory, and the ways meaning is attributed to such figures as slavery, resistance, or Africa in the present) we must simultaneously consider “event” (demography – including ethnicity – through time, the sociology and

sciousness need not lead to ethnographic self-absorption, or to the conclusion that it is impossible to know anything certain about other people. Rather, it leads to a concrete sense of why a Saramaka folktale, featured by Price, teaches that ‘knowledge is power, and that one must never reveal all of what one knows’.”

economics of particular plantation regimes, and so on). And that in order to understand "event" or "history" we must also consider "discourse" and ideology. How could one, for example, begin to comprehend the significance (the enormity) of current erasures and silencings of the slave past among peasants and fishermen in Martinique without knowing that Martinique was, in some sense, the slave society par excellence – one fourth the size of Long Island but receiving roughly the same number of enslaved Africans as the whole of the United States (R. Price 1998a)? In sum, I believe our understanding of the African American past must embrace both memory and event if we are to understand either. Which is why (in my writing and teaching) novels and poetry rub shoulders so closely with historical and anthropological monographs. History depends in part on the imagination, just as collective memory depends in part on past event.

Undoubtedly, generational differences underlie some of the gap between Scott's critique and my response.²² In a sense, to consider the M&P essay or *First-Time* as canonical is to convert them into artifacts of a status quo ripe to be surpassed. Given the new and often competing (even contradictory) agendas that relate to their respective *problématiques* – and all the attached anxieties – in the modern academy, it is hardly surprising that critiques as divergent as Lovejoy's and Scott's are now being voiced. Despite continuities in the brute realities of North American racism through time, the academy has undergone a sea change in the last three decades. Identity politics, issues of race and postcolonialism, postmodernism, and much else situate the young *fin-de-siècle* scholar very differently from the anthropologist trained at the end of what George Stocking (1992) called the "classical period" of the discipline (ca.1925-ca.1965). But that doesn't prevent the anthropologist from playing new tricks. If *First-Time* was marked by a tension between event and discourse – between trying to corroborate authentic Afro-American pasts and trying to deconstruct the production of history – *Enigma Variations*, a recent novel written with Sally is marked by the tension between its protagonists' trying to appraise the authenticity of pieces of "primitive art" and the authors trying to deconstruct the idea of authenticity. R. Price's *The Convict and the Colonel*, about a rather different postcolonial African American society, takes on event (slavery, the *bagne*) and memory (mine, theirs) and discourse (academic, literary, and "folk"), as well as nostalgia, to consider more generally where we've been and where we might be going. As Stocking found, it is far more difficult to historicize the extended-present – the period since the 1960s,

22. For more on Scott's project of re-theorizing the horizons of postcolonial politics, see his most recent book (1999). His chapter on the poetry of Kamau Brathwaite, in which he attempts to "disarticulate Brathwaite's vision from the anthropological epistemology through which he seeks to guarantee it" (Scott 1999:127), is particularly relevant to the issues in this paper.

now almost as long as the "classical period" – than it is the more distant past. Many of the concerns in the academy and the society at large at the time the M&P essay or *First-Time* were written have faded, and a very different set have taken their place. The passions remain, whether about ethnicity or discourse, but they have been radically displaced.

At last, perhaps anti-climactically, we arrive at the "unconscious principles" that Kevin Yelvington asked me to elucidate, when he first encouraged me to undertake this essay. As Trouillot (1998:21) now frames the project:

Sidney Mintz and Richard Price suggest that the West African cultural heritage is to be found mainly in unconscious, underlying "grammatical" principles: cognitive orientations, attitudes, expectations common to the diverse communities whence most of the enslaved came. They argue that these underlying principles ordered the process of creolization by making certain choices more appealing or more significant than other possible ones. This argument needs to be refined in light of more sustained research on the institutional impact of African ethnicity on slave practices in specific territories. In other words, the underlying principles that Mintz and Price highlight had to work through tensions among Africans in order to produce meaningful practices and we need to know how and when they did so. More important, however a *modus vivendi* on cultural grammar was obtained among slaves, shared principles – old and new – had to survive the European exercise of power. How did they do so? When and how were they given space and time to breathe and to breed? How did they survive and reproduce themselves enough to generate new institutions?

The idea of deep-level, unconscious principles as a key to unraveling the African American past is an old one (for Herskovits's "grammar of culture" statement, see Mintz & Price 1992:11). One could read much of Sally's and my work as an attempt to demonstrate its power in specific domains – from an overview of Afro-American naming patterns written nearly three decades ago (R. & S. Price 1972) to our just-published book, which deals in detail with a range of aesthetic domains (S. & R. Price 1999). From postures to costume, from embroidery to narrow-strip sewing, from woodcarving to calabash carving, and from music and dance to tale-telling, we try to show how widely-shared African aesthetic principles have played themselves out through three centuries of Saramaka history, beginning with the demographics of the slave trade and working our way through event and memory up to present-day production techniques. Since that lengthy book is now available for critical consideration and the argument about "unconscious principles" laid out in some detail (see also Sally's paper in this issue of *NWIG*), neither our descriptions and analyses of "creolization Saramaka-style" nor our accounts of the intricate fieldwork involved in teasing out these "unconscious principles" requires rehash or re-presentation here. The proof, as far as we are concerned, should not be in our claims but in the pudding.

It is worth noting, however, what that book – the fruit of more than three decades of thinking about the development of Saramaka culture – does *not* (indeed cannot) say about creolization. Miracles ultimately depend on faith, and the miracle of creolization has not yet proved to be an exception. Berlin and Morgan for North America, or Matory and the Prices for South America, provide extensive contextualization for the processes of culture change among the recently enslaved and their descendants in the New World. When such works are at their best, we feel almost as if we are witnesses to the particular conflicts and acts of solidarity and imagination involved in the shift from one kind of identity to another or from an Old World tradition to a new one. But, however far we are able to push back in time the documented beginnings of such cultural developments, we find ourselves stuck in the paradoxical position, like Achilles in Zeno's paradox, of never quite being able to catch the tortoise. Like physicists with their Big Bang Birth-of-the-universe, we can theorize the event (or the process) but we seem ever unable effectively to observe it. So, the ultimate miracle of creolization remains, at least for now, impenetrable. We can imagine (or theorize) how the women and men on plantation X worked out the procedures – the rites, the music, the beliefs – appropriate to the birth of twins, beginning when that first hypothetical mother brought her babies into the New World, but we can never be present at the blessed event itself. We know that it must have happened, and that it happened over time in tens of thousands of often-independent cases throughout the Americas. A miracle that repeated itself endlessly.

For Saramaka, we can now reliably push its date back before the mid-eighteenth century – two decades of archival research since the M&P essay permit unequivocal demonstration that, in general, African ethnicities were not, by that time, salient for Saramakas, culturally, in terms of identifying individuals, or as markers for groups. In other words, we can demonstrate that Saramaka society at the time of the Peace Treaty of 1762 was far closer to Saramaka today, in terms of cultural development, than it was to Africa. Yet, though we have been able to push the major creolization processes ever earlier in time, we are still unable to examine them directly.

Since our anthropological model of creolization derives from linguistics, it may be worth a final detour to briefly consider the state of the art among our linguist cousins. Even in a discipline that prides itself on relative systematics and scientific method, ideology and *parti-pris* (and subject position) seem to me to dominate at least as much (and for similar reasons) as in the other disciplines related to Afro-American studies. Exclusivistic and monocausal theories of creole genesis – whether based on Portuguese-pidgin monogenesis, African substrata, European superstrata, or the putative Bioprogram – seem as prevalent today as in the past. One example may suffice. In a recent review article on historical creolistics, Derek Bickerton (1999:98) casually but pointedly notes that “Like many (most?) Francophone creolists, and

unlike most, if not all non-Francophone creolists, he [Guy Hazaël-Massieux] sees creoles as modified continuations of their superstrates.” Is it not remarkable – however understandable, given the way the French think about their language – that Francophone creolists still insist (despite all the evidence brought by non-Francophone creolists) on, for example, the primacy of French in the creation of Haitian?²³ Or again, consider the vitriol Bickerton (1999:100-1) summons up to characterize John McWhorter’s (1997) account of creolization on the west coast of Africa, which is filled, he claims, with “half-truths, non-sequiturs, and mistakes [and] also ... plain falsifications,” adding that “To support such a sociolinguistically unlikely scenario, McWhorter can produce not a single citation, not one iota of historical evidence.” Even a glance at the *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* would show that such inflated (and self-serving) rhetoric is almost par for the course, on all sides of the debate. To the extent that creolist linguists depend ultimately on historians for their socio-cultural context and must infer the actual process of creolization from post-facto linguistic features, they are really little better off than the rest of us. Whether it’s Bickerton’s Saramaka Adams and Eves in the Suriname rainforest or McWhorter’s ancestors-of-the-Saramakas hanging out at Coromantee, we can still only imagine, using all the data at our disposal, something of what it might have been like.

Which leaves us, I suppose, considerably humbled, with our task to once again put our collective noses to the grindstone. In the end, it is only when the competing narratives are confronted, and weighed carefully against each other, that we can begin to develop reasons for giving greater credibility to one or the other. We have little choice but to keep on tilling the fields. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, “creolization” – even if resistant to direct observation – still remains, in Trouillot’s (1998:8) apt characterization, “a miracle begging for analysis.”

23. See R. & S. Price (1997) for discussion of the anti-African (pro-French) extremes to which Martiniquan *créolistes* have carried such arguments about the development of their native tongue.

NOTE

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BOURGEOIS WOMEN IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY
DOMINICAN NATIONAL DISCOURSE

A resolute desire to "modernize" characterized the last decades of the nineteenth and the first years of the twentieth century in most of Latin America. In tandem with this pattern, a bourgeois intelligentsia of recent vintage dedicated its efforts to redefining the polity in the Dominican Republic. With unrealized economic potential, a history of corrupt politics, and enduring social dissension as backdrop, the formulators of the national project faced a daunting task. They nevertheless embraced the opportunities offered by the sugar boom of the 1880s and 1890s, the assassination of the dictator Ulises Heureaux in 1899, and the influx of progressive ideas regarding education and civic participation at the turn of the century. With all of the aplomb they could muster, Dominican intellectuals examined the national character and ventured predictions for the future. The outcome of their musings was the now much dissected "discourse of progress," which – in defining the national – promptly placed immigrants from the British West Indies and Haiti, foreign and local cane workers, and titleless peasants on the margins of economic production, social intercourse, and political participation.

Newspaper and magazine representations of bourgeois women, one of the offshoots of this exercise in identity politics, similarly located citizenship beyond the reach of women. Upper- and middle-class women, I will argue in this article, invariably appeared in short stories, advertisements, or anecdotal columns as objects of men's political schemes or as irrelevant players in the formation of the nation. The male elite who put out these publications projected onto bourgeois women formulaic roles in the pre-conceived social order they controlled. I shall show here that, as they set the limits of national difference, they also effectively forestalled working-class women from joining the polity.

THE ROLE OF "THE OTHER" IN THE DISCOURSE OF PROGRESS

The blueprint for change in the Dominican Republic, as in the rest of Latin America, rested on the notion that citizens could coalesce around a universal definition of progress. Agreement was imperative (and assumed) over the pivotal role of private property, the necessity of participatory democracy, and the capacity of individuals to contribute to the welfare of the country.¹ The writings of José Ramón Abad, Eugenio María de Hostos, José Ramón López, and Pedro Francisco Bonó, all men of stature politically and socially, duly recognized the tension caused by the co-existence of *terrenos comuneros* (communal lands) and a capitalistic sugar industry. Newspaper editors, political essayists, and educators – such as Hostos, Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, and Américo Lugo – clamored for responsible government, for one attentive to popular needs and open to more than the dominant interest. In the social sphere, Bonó, Hostos, and Alejandro Angulo Guridi saw respect for the common folk, state-sponsored education, and immigration, respectively, as the building blocks of a cohesive Dominican nation. Though for the most part pessimistic regarding their country's endowment, turn-of-the-century intellectuals agreed that education, employment, democratic government, national sovereignty, freedom of the press, and private property held the promise of progress for the nation-in-the-making.

Not surprisingly, the ideology of progress propounded by these men ultimately attributed economic and social advances to the scientific cultivation of food crops and some export products, an enterprise they believed was the purview of Dominican males. The men who toiled on the soil, the discourse continued, were the owners of small tracts of land and, it finally concluded, were the symbols of the moral rectitude and physical endurance that characterized the Dominican people as a whole. References to women were aesthetic (they were like flowers; they cultivated beautiful gardens) or reproductive (land, like women, was fertile; the motherland, a woman, sought the welfare of her progeny). Sugar workers from nearby islands, and especially from Haiti, were suspect insofar as they were believed to introduce diseases; consorted with Dominicans, especially women; and took their wages home after the harvest. Some of the proponents of progress advocated the immigration of white settlers in family units, whose function was both to populate the vast expanses that remained unoccupied, and to strengthen through miscegenation the *raza*

1. The most succinct exposition of the discourse of progress can be found in González 1994, especially pp. 31, 34, 38, 64, 132-34. The works of all of the authors mentioned are readily available – collected and/or reprinted by several publishers. One author not mentioned above, who is probably representative of the intense pessimism characteristic of this period is Moscoso Puello (n.d.). Recently published, González *et al.* 1999 is the best analysis of these issues through time.

criolla (the Creole race), a term that underscored the national at the expense of the racial – the European, native, and African mix that characterizes Dominicans, much to their dismay.² Journalists and essayists, then, either embraced immigrants, women, and wage workers as contributors to the process of national development in predetermined roles or suspected their ability to participate in building a common sense of purpose.

THE ROLE OF BOURGEOIS WOMEN IN THE FORGING OF THE NEW NATION

Nobody doubted that the process of civic regeneration required the insertion of women in reformulations of the nation-in-the-making. As everywhere else, women were recognized first and foremost for their biological and social reproductive functions. As mothers, they were directly responsible for nation-building: they literally brought into the world the next generation of (male) citizens. As the companions of men (their husbands, brothers, uncles, cousins, male family friends), they offered the material and emotional support that allowed men to engage in the more public functions of state-building. Women of all classes managed households, raised children, cultivated the family's ties to the larger community, and comforted the men in their lives. Not expected to contribute much by way of their intellect, the female associates of upper- and middle-class men were particularly instrumental insofar as they reproduced the genetic pool and the social values necessary for the country's development. Working-class women, with fewer resources available for these tasks, were closely watched by their bourgeois sisters and their husbands.

Given that not all women, even if upper class, were considered suited to carry out such consequential duties, Dominican literati pondered the elements necessary for the attainment of the correct social order. A sector of the elite had for decades been propounding the notion of universal secular primary and secondary education, from which some young women, notably Salomé Ureña and her students, had benefited. The founding of newspapers, and the publication of magazines presumably directed at a general readership, interested in politics, the economy, literature, and social events, was an added avenue for the dissemination of ideas of national import. The editors of these publications, men such as José Ricardo Roques, Raúl Abreu, Manuel Flores Cabrera (a Venezuelan political exile), Francisco Gregorio Billini, and Rafael Justino Castillo, and one woman, Petronila Angélica Gómez, were generally politically active (some even holding public office) and socially committed. As was the case in the United States and Western Europe, the Dominican press

2. For a comment on the significance of color in the development of nationhood, see Hoetink 1982:165-92 and San Miguel 1992.

became the instrument of the educated and the civic-minded, both to express their ideas and to influence others.³

Perhaps to assuage elite anxieties, local magazines and newspapers dedicated sections to the "fairer sex" and published pieces that presumably depicted universal human conditions and thus reinforced expected gender roles and denounced aberrant behavior. Some of the authors of essays and short stories were foreigners – most notably Emilia Pardo Bazán and Jacinto Benavente (Spanish), Froilán Turcios (Ecuadorian), Manuel Díaz Rodríguez (Venezuelan), and Catulle Mendes (French). But many of the plethora of short stories on the virtues and vices of women were written by Dominicans – writers who will never be remembered for their literary endeavors, but who were at the time certainly well connected socially and, more importantly, who boldly advocated for Dominican autonomy (from the United States) and economic development. In many cases, the same men who wrote passionate editorials on the suitability of alternative political and economic arrangements for the emerging state also published moving fiction and poetry meant to establish for the new nation a safe and moral social order.⁴

The stories and periodic columns these men wrote appeared regularly both in magazines directed at a general readership and in more politically minded publications. Most of the fictional pieces were set in faraway lands or times, although the men, women, and children in them were intended to be universally familiar. With only a few exceptions, good women inspired their mates with their obedience, persistence, understanding, honesty, and impeccable homemaking, or beautiful women ruined men because of their greed, vanity, ignorance, frivolity, and inconstancy. Men, in all cases noble beings whose sense of duty was their most transparent quality, either found solace in faithful female companions or were victimized by treacherous women.

3. The use of the press to disseminate particular ideas and images since the inception of printing up to the present has been well documented for the United States and Western Europe. See, for example, Doughan 1987, Cancian & Gordon 1988, Tinkler 1995, Burkhalter 1996, Behling 1997, Zuckerman 1998, Gadsden 2000. Similar work has been done for the Third World, but the effort has not been consistently sustained. See for example, Hahner 1978, Mendelson 1978, Minault 1988, Franco 1989, Seminar on Women and Culture in Latin America 1990. An excellent picture of the turn of the century in the Dominican Republic – especially of the role of women in education, gender relations in the so-called private and public spheres, and increased public discussion of matters of national import – from the perspective of a woman is Alvarez's (2000) fictionalized account of Salomé Ureña's life.

4. An in-depth investigation of the public lives of the authors and editors cited in this article, carried out by renowned historian Roberto Cassá (personal communication), shows that literati and political thinkers, if not one and the same, certainly moved in the same circles of Dominican high society.

The sole storyline that illustrated a nonconflictive relationship between the sexes emphasized a woman's nurturing role, and her limited but personally satisfying domain, and men's responsibility (and assumed capacity) to make women happy. Francisco and Josefa were scheduled to get married when Francisco disappeared. Ten years later, the author found him in Barcelona, where Francisco revealed the reason for eluding his commitment: he had fallen in love with his fiancée's sister, who was dying of tuberculosis. The honorable thing to do, he reasoned at the time, was to flee the situation. He felt certain that he had made the right decision, having learned that Josefa, who had worried about his change in temperament, continued to care for her sister until she died, and later married a man who made her happy (Forge 1912). In another of these accounts of harmonious family and love relationships, a young couple kisses passionately at an evening rendezvous; at 9 p.m., the woman goes home, kisses her sleeping grandmother warmly on the cheek, and goes to bed to dream of her loved one (Bobeá 1910). Domesticity, duty, innocence, loyalty – these were the forces that made women good.⁵

Women also served as nothing more than love objects of men in these literary pieces, although disappointment or hardship formed a part of the drama. Conventional wisdom averred that women "walk on this earth stealing the wills [of men] with the [red] carnation of the[ir] cheeks and the light of the[ir] eyes" (García Gómez 1903).⁶ Addressing a fictional woman, another romantic commented: "It's just that your eyes are a duplicate image of your soul, and the soul is that fanciful flare-up that burns in your body as does a lamp in a temple consecrated to the cult of Aphrodite in the inviolate secret of discreet offerings" (Herrera 1912). Not all women provided unequivocal desire, another author cautioned. "A woman is like a verse. A sonorous hexameter, a brilliant hendecasyllable. A dull line, composed by a poor lyricist. One can find anything" (Turcios 1912). But, another counseled, "to try to extinguish the passion for a woman one adores by leaving her is to want to quench your thirst without drinking." The effect of failed relationships was such on men that "[they] avenge on tender women their not having been loved by the tramps. This," the author lamented, "is what we call being very strong."⁷ Relationships between men and women were in fact problematic: one writer bemoaned having passed up the opportunity to share life with a gypsy who silently observed his flirtations with other women (Díaz Rodríguez 1911). The only safe place for men, it appeared, was the male imagination: one poet shared with readers "brides of all colors who g[ave him] hopes in a life of misfortune, g[ave him] strength, warmth, [and] inspire[d him] with their caresses and kisses" (Ornes 1915). Real or not, the leads in these tales were

5. Another man-falls-in-love-with-fiancée's-cousin can be found in Toriko 1912.
6. All translations from the Spanish are my own.
7. *Renacimiento* 1(9) July 1, 1915. Sobre el amor.

men whose intentions were honorable and their longing for companionship, honest. The women characters who incited their introspection were, remarkably, exemplary of their gender: warm, pleasurable, modest, vigilant of their reputation.

It seemed a more pressing matter, however, to portray the uglier aspects of the female psyche. The stories of scheming and alluring women not only outnumbered the ones referred to above; they were also more elaborate in plot, more selective in the use of language, rich in detail, precise in structure, and transparently didactic – none of which should suggest that they were “better” literature. An extreme example of this other depiction of women focuses on female lasciviousness and capriciousness. A man contemplates suicide because his wife, who is a prostitute, will not spend time with him unless he pays her. Eighteen and a virgin when they married, the reader learns, she was well versed in carnal matters. The couple now have two children, and he has spent his entire fortune on her whims; but she continues to live a decadent life (Mendes 1909b).

Oversexed females were a commonplace in these tales. In one of the few stories with a local setting, a young and eager wife of a seaman who tired from traveling constantly from Santo Domingo to San Pedro de Macorís took out her frustration by throwing a stick at a rooster that was not responding to the sexual advances of a hen in the yard – conceivably a duplication of the wife’s own situation (Egea Mier 1903). In more cosmopolitan surroundings, an equally sex-driven “little [European (?)] baroness” rushed to confess the previous night’s excesses to a priest, and apparently delighted so much in revisiting the experience that she forgot the corset she had been holding in her hand inside the confessional. As she left the church, a statue of Satan appeared to smirk at her predicament (Mendes 1909a). In a not entirely tasteless and very pointedly political humorous aside allegedly found scribbled on a statue in Rome, a farmer claims he supports the pope and the emperor; a merchant confesses he steals from the previous three; a lawyer deceives all four; a physician can drive the five to their deaths; a woman serves as temptation for all six; a priest absolves all seven; and the devil takes all eight to hell with him.⁸ Although men have no actual interaction with the female characters in the course of these stories, the reader has enough circumstantial evidence to condemn women’s behavior and speculate on its consequences.

Magnifying the danger of women’s uncontrollable sex drive, were their coquettish manner, fickleness, and capacity for deceit. Flor de Oro (Golden Flower), apparently so named for her blonde tresses, had set her sights on a New York millionaire (Mr. Love), to whom her uncle hoped to marry her sister off. Defying the contradiction between her objective and his name, she schemed to have the house cat attack her sister, who became blind and then

8. *Renacimiento* 1(14) September 15, 1915. Origen de los pasquines.

insane. Flor de Oro confessed her crime only when Mr. Love sent her uncle a telegram inviting him to his wedding (Mejía 1913). In another tale of disingenuousness, a thirty-year-old "Yankee" woman, married with two daughters, proposed to her Dominican tenant, the presumed author, that they have an affair. Although he initially embarked on this forbidden jaunt without any vacillation, he began to get jealous of her husband and suggested that they elope. The woman "fixed in [him] her deep and serene ocean blue eyes, laden with satisfied desire" and explained that their romance had only been a whim and that she loved her husband and adored her daughters (Abreu 1913). Although it is significant that the woman in the last story is American (and I will have more to say about that further on), the morale of both literary pieces appears to be that the female sex is untrustworthy and capable of the most inexplicable actions. Another not-so-family-bound woman and her lover, the reader learns in another trite story by Ulises Heureaux, the dictator's son, were due to meet a ghastly fate at the hands of her indignant husband, a train machinist. He had plotted to speed to a crash the train they had taken to Le Havre for a two-day holiday. By killing himself and the treacherous pair, he simultaneously avoided the shame that would weigh down on him and punished his unfaithful wife (Heureaux 1903). Perhaps these lamentable outcomes would have been avoided if the male characters in these stories had been aware that women were duplicitous. The words of one writer are unequivocal:

The moon is a sham: it does not have the shape which it shows us at present, nor does it travel in the direction that it appears to be traveling in, nor is the light it sends us hers. Being feminine, being a woman, [the moon] is a liar: it looks at us sad, indifferent or joyful and its state is always the same, that of an immutable corpse!⁹

Those women who did show their true colors, moreover, exhibited traits that were totally undesirable and performed actions that harmed innocent people. In another "local" tale, for example, the wife of the minister of the Treasury pressured him to find jobs in government for her relatives: two fifteen-year-old sons, her father and grandfather, and fifteen cousins. She countered his reluctance by pointing out that a man who does not rule with his family is committing political suicide. Justifying her final request (to appoint their dog as doorman), she reminded her husband of the Roman emperor who appointed his horse to a senate seat (López 1903c). In a country notorious for nepotism, at the dawn of an era hopeful for integrity, blaming women for the practice was a wise move. A less directly relevant account of women's disturbing behavior was a society woman's habit of torturing oysters with lemon and fork before consuming them. The author, the woman's husband-to-be, sus-

9. *Cuna de América* 1(9) May 31, 1903. *Mentiras de la luna*.

pected she would have liked to see their "faces" as they agonized in her hands (Diez de Tejada 1912).

Impulsive perhaps because they were unintelligent, inexperienced, or naturally gullible, these "transparent" women only caused trouble for men. In one case, a young woman purposefully spread rumors about another's virtue in order to provoke a breakup between the man she loved and his bride, the subject of the slander. The peasant killed his betrothed, her alleged lover, and himself – all because of a woman's reckless gossip (Millan 1903). In another instance, a daydreaming wife reflected on her situation – her husband was passionless, practical; her children, demanding; and her servants, untrustworthy. Although she knew her husband would dismiss her concerns by comparing her circumstances to those of others' (less fortunate, one assumes), this incurable romantic (*la novelesca*) imagined other times: "when men walked around with empty pockets, but a chest filled with an enormous heart, a heart where passion and rapture dwelled, and where common sense and reason, which now want to rule the world, didn't even have attic space" (López 1903b). Another fanciful wife begins to imagine her husband's visits to a brothel are sexually motivated simply because her friend had insinuated it. Written in epistolary form, the story concludes with a letter that explained her husband and the madam were simply trying to arrange a marriage, an account of events the wife is apparently inclined to believe (Rodríguez 1903). In another story, an Italian nobleman, the Marqués de Vale Alegre, decided to marry the object of his affection, a lion tamer named Gilda, convinced as he was of her honorable parentage (*ascendencia digna*). A senator-friend warned him that "it was possible that beauty was the only atavistic bequest [Gilda had received from] Aphrodite." On the wedding night, Azís, Gilda's favorite lion, killed the groom when Gilda stepped outside the tent. Faced with the horrific scene, she rushed to embrace her lover, then lowered her head against the lion's forehead, and stained herself with blood (Fiallo 1903). If only women would stay still and keep quiet, if they did not transgress their station, these stories imply, reasonable men could continue going about their business undisturbed and be happy – in one case, alive.

The fictional exchanges between Electricity, a woman, and Thomas Edison captured best men's problematic associations with women. Electricity is introduced to the reader as a negative and a positive force, capable of both curing headaches and taking lives (through electrocution). Edison's relationship with her is, not surprisingly, conflictive – he accuses her of having passed through many (men's) hands – Italian, German, French – and resorts to caressing her with the purpose of "taming" her (*domarla*). It is with Edison, the author tells us, that:

this traitor has a frenzied love affair [*amores rabiosos*]. Notice that he treats her as a wretch, he makes her work from six to six as if she were black,

exploits her, lives through her effort, and yet that shameless scoundrel does not rebel against her loved tyrant. For him only, she engages in obsequious debauchery, incredible weaknesses. She is a degraded and submissive slave.¹⁰

In a moment of empowerment, Electricity charges Edison with trying to force her "to do something filthy," but he retorts she has no moral grounds to complain because she is a "flirt and an idler." The piece concludes by making fun of some of the applications of electricity (growing legumes in less time) and starkly stating: "Edison wanted a vulgarity, it's true, but the human species lives on vulgarities."¹¹

Despite this allegory's enormous potential for psychoanalysis, it is more prudent to focus, for the purposes of this article, on the uniquely Dominican variants of eminently universal themes. Electricity possesses female character traits: she is disloyal and coquettish, and must be forced to perform productive work. Even under a man's supervision, she only produces vulgarity. That man, however, is a foreigner, and for that reason, not a very reliable character himself. He treats her like an African slave, something the reader is expected to immediately reject as unthinkable, unless of course the woman is a shameless slut (the oversexed female). In that case, her unbecoming behavior strips her of any claim to respectable womanhood, and the reader can, if not justify, certainly suspend judgment on Edison's actions. Giving in to eminently national insecurities about race, gender, and the outside, the author chooses to disassociate from the unworthy turn of events, which he labels as "vulgar" – the product of the collaboration of a domineering foreign man and a weak racialized woman.

Fortunately for men, other stories collectively suggest, most women were plain stupid and their actions were of no consequence. In one fanciful plot, two princes who were rivals for a princess's love consulted a fairy for advice on how to discern her preference – the princess had apparently given both some hope. The fairy arranged for the princess's thoughts to be visible, and when the two young men returned to palace, they saw coming out of the princess's head countless butterflies of all colors, "fluttering with lively charm," "swaying delicately [on flowers due to] their light weight" – restless, palpitating, inconstant, vivacious, fickle (Graal 1912). In another tale conceivably illustrative of women's capacity for judgment, a woman allowed a stranger into her home indefinitely. He mistreated her, but always asked for forgiveness. One day, he announced his departure and explained he had never said he was there on a permanent basis. It was Love. "And Martha remained calm, mistress of her home, free of frights, fears, or apprehension, and devoted to the company of grave and excellent reflection." Still, the narrator tells the

10. *El eco de la opinión* 683, July 9, 1892. Correspondencias del exterior.

11. *El eco de la opinión* 683, July 9, 1892. Correspondencias del exterior.

reader, she hoped Love would knock on her door again (Pardo Bazán 1903). In another victim-of-love parable, a woman stopped a man on the street, spit on his face, and told him she hated him. Realizing it was the wrong man, she apologized, but immediately reneged when she confirmed that he in fact looked like "him" (Perdomo 1915). To close this segment on inane women, a prostitute dies at the hands of one of her clients, a young and inexperienced man who had fallen in love with her. He found her door closed one day, and forced it – to find her with another man. As she agonized, she found relief in thinking that he killed her only because he loved her (Pellerano Castro 1903). Airheads, hopeless romantics, irrational lovers, tender-hearted tramps – these women were nothing to worry about.

If these examples were discouraging, others served to establish that men's expectations were not unreasonable, and the outcome of their efforts held some promise. Olimpia, a princess, was almost perfect: she had a beautiful face, blond hair, and skin like ivory. Despite these conspicuously feminine qualities, she had no compassion, a feature of her personality that men approached as a challenge, in one case dying in an effort to provoke some emotion in her. There are other details that made her an anomaly of the female gender. She was amused by "satirical writing" that ridiculed humanity, and did not read romances. Her room had no flowers or birds – only mirrors. When her mother died, she did not cry, and instead fell mysteriously ill. The fairies the king consulted only indicated the use of a mirror, a handkerchief, and a pair of scissors to break the spell. Doctors advised her to cut her hair so that her head would clear up, but she refused. While the princess slept, however, her governess carried out the instructions. Only then did she cry, repenting for having been cruel. Those tears redeemed her, the author interjects for the benefit of the reader, and rid her of her sins. Conveniently, Olimpia is now perfect: beautiful, white, blonde, *and* emotional (Ferraz Revenga 1912). Conceivably, she also likes flowers and birds, and loves humanity – a paradigm of womanhood.

Another mechanism used to reassure men that everything was in order was the conviction that women were a known quantity. A Hindu tale of creation published at the time confirms this notion. The myth explained how Twashtri made the first woman after he had spent all of his creative material on the first man.

He took from the moon its roundness, the undulating curves of the serpent, the graceful interweaving of a vine, the velvety softness of flowers, the lightness of a feather, the sweet look of a gazelle, the tears of clouds, the sweetness of honey, the cruelty of a tiger, the heat of fire, the coldness of snow, the chatter of a parrot, and the murmur of a dove.¹²

12. *Renacimiento* 1(4) April 7, 1915. Como fue hecha la primer mujer.

Regardless of whether there was indeed a Hindu legend that recounted this process or not, it is significant that a Dominican magazine saw this literary piece as interesting or useful to its readers. With two exceptions, women's physical attributes derive from the inanimate world and their character traits, from animals. Women as nature motivated by instincts, to be exploited or domesticated by men – an eminently turn-of-the-century Western European trope applied to inferior peoples.

In some exceptional stories, individual women acted on their own with the valor and clear-headedness characteristic of men. Margarita de Ruysac, daughter of dukes, promised her mother she would marry the Count of Meridor. A friend of her brother fell in love with her and provoked the count to a duel; if he lost, he figured, he would at least die thinking of her. During the duel, the two adversaries did not seem to want to kill each other. At some point, the count told his foe he did not want to be haunted by his death as he married Margarita, to which the unsolicited suitor responded with a deadly offensive, only to realize that "the count" was Margarita. In despair, Margarita's admirer buried his own sword in his chest, so he could die with her, as they kissed (Heureaux 1910). Although the storyline in this case parallels the others insofar as a woman is the cause of tragedy, including her own, remarkably, the real hero in this story was Margarita. The count disappeared from the plot, the smitten family friend ruined his own chances of quite literally "getting the girl," but Margarita was as good as any man in that she was noble enough to know what her duty was (keep her promise even though she loved another) and saw the incident through to its logical conclusion.

Another positive representation of women, not surprisingly, results from the intertwining of the destinies of woman/mother and fatherland (*patria*), a connection that works better in Spanish because the word *patria* is feminine. A short story about a dying man and a baby who both await the stroke of 12 midnight to depart this world and celebrate life, respectively, concludes with the author's words:

Yes, let us salute him [the baby, and by extension, his mother], may he be prosperous, fecund, full of light, but of that light that will illuminate the patriotism of those who rule our destinies, for the greatness of the Fatherland [purposefully equivocally, the baby's mother *and* the country]. (Olga 1901)

Holding that women are more virtuous than men, another writer labeled women "the heroines of the fatherland," intimating that for women fatherland (country) was family and home. Because women were weak beings, he explained, they gravitated toward strength (protection – in the form of the state, one surmises), so that if the country collapsed, women, the keepers of home and family, were eminently vulnerable – a veritable predicament

(Lamartine 1915). Despite the positive role identification, one is sad to see, only males can make women great or effect their downfall.

In contrast to the majority of women protagonists, men leads in all these stories are rational, responsible, and above their peers. In a first person short reflection, the author bid a final goodbye to his lover, who "belong[ed] to another." He lamented man's cowardice in the face of "the despotic laws he himself composes to torment himself [monogamy? marital fidelity?]." Painfully conscious that he and his loved one have done the right thing, he resigns himself to loneliness (Rodríguez Embil 1903). Another dutiful citizen, this one in an exotic land, is equally accepting of his fate. Ahmed and his love, Fátima, had been strengthening their relationship, when Fátima was whisked away to the sultan's harem, "where innocence bow[ed] its forehead and die[d] between the lascivious and defiling arms of some crowned satyr." Ahmed, in desperation, "commits the sacrilegious act of professing a threat against the sacred life of the Son of the Prophet," for which faux pas he is stabbed and found on the banks of the Tigris (Logroño 1910). Although the reader is called on to feel pity for Ahmed, his transgression against the state is undoubtedly worthy of the punishment he received – understandably, Ahmed's soul must find solace in wandering through the world searching for his beloved.

As living vehicles of respectability, men thought of family and state first, as opposed to women, who behaved as if their actions had no consequences. A woman proposed to her rich and unattractive husband that he allow her to have an affair with a man who awaited her company outside the door. She would pretend to love her husband in public, but would secretly consume her passion with the other man. If her husband forced her to have sex with him, she would threaten to find thousands of lovers. Although early twenty-first-century readers are denied the denouement of this dilemma (the pages are missing), it appeared the husband was ready to accept this proposition for the sake of appearances (to save his manly honor).¹³ Likewise, the author of what appears to be an op-ed piece, vehemently appealed for a reprieve of the sentence for a Cuban woman "of modest extraction" who shot the father of her daughter, a high-society young man who did not legally acknowledge their baby. The mother, who lived in penury, ran into her former lover one day and shot him. Although the court sentenced her as lightly as it could, the article advocated a full pardon for "the unfortunate avenger of her honor."¹⁴ In both of these cases, men uphold notions of honor that hold society, and the state, together.

There is only one exception to this pattern of men who do right by women and women who are either demanding ingrates (which is bad) or accepting of their fate (which is good) – the amusing story of Teresa, who was "pretty as

13. *Blanco y negro* (39), 1909. Date, volume, and title missing.

14. *Blanco y negro* 4 (180) March 2, 1912. Tragedia pasional.

an angel and painted like a pig." Teresa directed her feminine charm, always in a most decorous manner, toward a group of artists at the seashore, who showed their appreciation by giving her some of their paintings. On one occasion, she persuaded each of them to fill in a part of the canvas she was working on – sea, clouds, waves, rocks, some nude female figures. The following year, she entered the painting in a competition, and received an honorable mention, primarily because the three men who had contributed to her composition were part of the jury and could not help but admire their own work (Montegut 1901). Although the woman in this story was as deceitful as others in this genre and her only visible asset was her beauty, she is different from other female characters in that she manipulated men in a way that is intended to be funny, and exposed what comes across as a male flaw, vanity.

There were other, more direct ways, to tell bourgeois women what their station was, and what society's expectations were for them. Like today, advertisements and advice columns emphasized appearances and health. Tocologic pills, for example, restored health lost "for reasons peculiar to [women's] organisms" – one assumes menstruation, pregnancy, menopause – which diminished the requisite fresh complexion, firm body tissue, and healthy countenance. The pills also "cured the most inveterate disorders" – one can only surmise what these were.¹⁵ It comes as no small comfort to some of us today that women were esteemed in this time period for the "soft roundness of their form." But "if nature, who does not always distribute favors according to human desire, denies this rotundity, or worse, replaces it by a superabundance of angles and impertinent bones, only the seamstress can calm the desperation of Eve's daughters" and happily, so can the application of the creams and lotions recommended.¹⁶ Other products augmented breasts and lightened skin color.¹⁷ Advice columns were for the most part "modern" in outlook, and so, if they did not value health over beauty, they at least made them synonymous. An article explained how in the past men and women wore garters below the knee for aesthetic reasons and to denote wealth through elaborate designs and their skillful execution. Recent scientific advances had shown that this practice could cause circulation problems, so that women should place their garters 7-8 centimeters above the knee.¹⁸ Tight or heavy dresses, corsets, and narrow shoes were shown to cut circulation, cause indigestion, and prevent the development of muscles.¹⁹

15. *El eco de la opinión* 57, June 18, 1880. Píldoras tocológicas.

16. *El eco de la opinión* 684, July 16, 1892. Gacetillas.

17. *Renacimiento* 1(6) May 7, 1915. Receta para desarrollar el busto; *Renacimiento* 1(18) November 15, 1915. Para las damas.

18. *El eco de la opinión* 681, June 25, 1892. Las ligas.

19. *Renacimiento* 1(13) September 1, 1915. Los vestidos estrechos.

In addition to achieving beauty and health, women were expected to excel in the more important function of managing households and raising children. One advice column told the story of a woman "not very young nor pretty, with an average education but intelligent, who loved her husband and knew how to admire his qualities and intelligence." She decided that her calling in life was to make the home a refuge for her husband, and dedicated her time to preparing healthy and elaborate meals, to have in the house the magazines he liked, to smile when he got home from work, to not talk to him when he brought work home from the office, to keep the house clean. One day, he recognized her efforts, telling her that her outstanding quality was "to find time for everything."²⁰ Another writer advised:

Woman is only fulfilled when she knows love [in the biblical sense?]. Her achievements are in the home, where she functions as the heart and the man as the head. To form her children's characters is a mission more worthy than men's and certainly more admirable than that of famous women who are recognized in world history texts.²¹

Adding legitimacy to Dominican expectations, U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt corroborated this arrangement in a short paragraph, to the effect that men formed homes and brought the bread; women supported men, raised children, and managed domestic aspects. Although Roosevelt acknowledged that there were wives who fought "in the lonely heights of a serene and totally selfless heroism" (Roosevelt 1915), it is not clear whether they were part and parcel of the conventional scheme or exceptions to the rule.

Not all of the efforts to locate women on a plane agreeable to bourgeois male intentions were as transparent and as alien to early twenty-first-century readers as the ones discussed above. There were very serious reflections on women's subordination especially through the institution of marriage, that resonate even today because of the inevitably negotiated nature of unions between men and women worldwide and because of the continuous inflexible position of the Catholic church with respect to civil divorce. Male and female writers lamented that although the legal system gave women civil and political rights, they were incapable of exercising them because of the way they were educated both at home and in schools. "Slavery" was not too strong a word to describe the relationship that existed in a sexual union, a term the author uses to refer to marriage.²² Another writer went further: not only had women not been taught that a man's psychology was a function of his physiology (that men's sexual organs governed their behavior) so that "matrimony ... [wa]s a bag containing 99 snakes and one eel," but in addition divorce

20. *Renacimiento* 1(9) July 1, 1915. Su talento.

21. *Renacimiento* 1(6) May 7, 1915. El carácter de la mujer.

22. *Renacimiento* 1 (9) July 1, 1915. Condición de la mujer.

was not really an option, because women's only "career" was marriage (López 1903a). The debate over divorce must have been so significant, that it prompted one woman to write a booklet entitled *La mujer: Lo que es y lo que debe ser el feminismo: Mi modo de pensar sobre el divorcio* (Woman: What Feminism Is and What It Should Be: My Thoughts on Divorce). The title of this publication, however, should not suggest that the author was not very much a woman of her time. She explained, for example, that working women should not be looked upon with suspicion, since a woman would never abandon her other duties, because equal rights "did not excuse her from what is natural law, reinforced by custom." The author was more than conciliatory; she believed that the development of women's intellect in childhood and puberty would allow them, as adults, to examine their marital problems and find a solution, thus guiding men, who like other human beings after all "ha[d] a heart and [were morally] upright." If divorce existed as a necessary contingency, as a way of avoiding other harmful paths (an abusive situation, an unhappy marriage), "[male] superiority would end and mutual respect would shine in the home." Nevertheless, she emphasized, marriage was a contract, and if broken, each partner should be able to enjoy his own free will (García 1913:32-33, 42-43).

Along the same lines, other authors advocated measures that ameliorated the situation of women. Latin American young women, one article lamented, became wives and mothers without adequate preparation. They indulged their children by allowing them to do whatever they wanted, and this lack of discipline resulted in a generation poorly equipped to lead the country responsibly. Children in the United States, on the other hand, were raised by both parents, and women had some contact with the world outside the home through work.²³ In a U.S. contest covered in a Dominican magazine, the winning entry to the question "what should we do with our daughters?" was highly praised: provide them with primary schooling, teach them domestic labors, teach them to save, explain that a hardworking husband is better than an elegant one, teach them to tend to gardens and flowers and to reject false appearances, instill in them that in choosing a husband, morality is more important than wealth.²⁴ A local female author added that women's calling extended beyond the strictly domestic and should reach out to things sublime, useful, and good – through the reading of history (López Penha de Senior 1913). Since women were physically limited to the domestic arena, a well-known Spanish writer argued, journalists had a special responsibility to bring the world to them. By reading the newspaper, women could experience "history" vicariously and acquire knowledge without compromising their virtue. Husbands should be grateful that their wives' imaginations were being stim-

23. *Revista Escolar* 1(3) October 31, 1910. La enseñanza oficial extranjera.

24. *Renacimiento* 1(16) October 15, 1915. ¿Qué haremos con nuestras hijas?

ulated in a controlled setting, and not by activities women themselves devised in the loneliness of the home (Benavente 1915).

Unfortunately, and notwithstanding their limited scope, the solemnity of these columns, was counterbalanced by the lightweight misogyny of regular contributors. One writer published a daily listing of women who should not get married, among which were flirts, who "provoked men in a scandalous manner," and jealous women, who "imagined" their husbands were unfaithful.²⁵ In Hungary, another columnist informed his reading public, bigamists were disciplined by forcing them to live in the same house "with all the women." This would be an even more terrible punishment, the writer added, if mothers-in-law were included in the package.²⁶ Another commentator captured men's expectations of women best in his advice to newly married women, coined as the ten commandments – 1) to love her husband above all things; 2) not to promise love in vain; 3) to arrange celebrations for him; 4) to love him more than her father and mother; 5) not to torment him with demands, whims, and tantrums; 6) not to trick him; 7) not to nag him, or spend money on frivolities; 8) not to speak behind his back, or pretend a nervous attack, or anything of the sort; 9) not to desire another other than her husband; 10) not to covet others' luxuries, or to stop to look at store fronts. These should be placed in the make up drawer and read twelve times a day.²⁷ The facetious demands of these authors remind readers of the aplomb and self-assurance that is synonymous with male privilege.

To be fair, men might really have feared the consequences of the empowerment of women: the loss of male privilege or equality – which ironically, took on a ludicrous configuration. One journalist reported that there had been cases in Madrid of women killing their husbands for adultery. His voice thundered out of the newspaper's pages in the face of this injustice:

So be it: If a man whose honor is injured, who runs the risk of educating [another man's] children, who is mocked in the most violent way possible given society's conventions, requests a jail sentence [for his cheating wife, one assumes], when the deceitful heart of the woman who stole his hopes, happiness, and honor, what punishment should a woman receive who without losing her honor (a husband's infidelity lends a certain aura of victimization to the woman who far from losing her dignity is elevated) because he doesn't love her as much as she wishes him too?²⁸

25. *El eco de la opinión* 34, January 5, 1880. Las que no deben casarse; *El eco de la opinión* 35, January 10, 1880. Las que no deben casarse.

26. *Renacimiento* 1(8) June 12, 1915. Contra la bigamia.

27. *El eco de la opinión* 34, January 5, 1880. Mandamientos.

28. *El eco de la opinión* 685, July 23, 1892. Correspondencias del exterior.

Another columnist notified Dominicans of scientific experiments carried out in Denmark, that measured hair loss in men and women. Since women at present preserved their thick hairlines through old age, the writer figured, they will be able to grow mustaches in a hundred years.²⁹ One detects a certain uneasiness with respect to what is understood as a threat to patriarchy.

There were other, oblique ways, to place bourgeois women in pre-determined roles that were ancillary to men's actions. Curiously, the beautification of the urban core came to be described in feminine terms, as the transformations in the cityscape were ostensibly promoted precisely for the benefit of the young ladies of the upper class, who allegedly wished to stroll about and circulate with decorum.³⁰ One newspaper article made the connection between the manipulation of the environment and women, reinforcing the nature vs. culture dichotomy that subordinated them to men. Beauty in vegetation (without any purpose or practical application), the piece explained, was synonymous with femininity:

The cultivation of flowers is a very important part of the education of women. We think the teaching of floriculture should begin ... in girls' schools, to direct them to love natural beauties and to obtain from that love sublime comparisons for life itself. We believe that a woman who does not enjoy flowers is a rarity, an untamed animal, a spell, whom we cannot approach without evil consequences. The beauty of a woman and the beauty of a flower are complementary: one was created to be confused with the other.³¹

In an article arguing for the utility of trees, the author explained that farmers consider trees their enemies because branches attract birds that eat their crops, and because trees occupy land that could be used for planting. What they don't understand, the writer continues, is that trees produce rain, protect against cold winds that would delay vegetation, defend against warm winds that cause erosion, increase the production of dew, provide wood for the home, and produce leaves that fertilize the soil (Pérez Argemi 1911). Trees, like women, do not produce anything; but they are naturally good and can be used by men.

The short stories, advice columns, advertisements, and opinion pieces I examined coincide in their representation of ideal gender roles: dutiful and selfless women should stand by their men, who toiled in government, agriculture, trade, and so on, thus strengthening the body politic. Under the watchful eye of attentive husbands or vigilant fathers, bourgeois women were entrusted with the task of raising the new generation of citizens. If not them-

29. *Renacimiento* 1(18) November 15, 1915. Las mujeres tendrán bigotes.

30. Archivo General de la Nación, Santo Domingo, Ayuntamiento de Santo Domingo, nuevo 2842 (no month given).

31. *Revista de Agricultura* (July 1909):265-72. Parques, jardines y árboles ornamentales.

selves naturally the vessels of rationality, responsibility, common sense, morality, and virtue, women could be shaped by male creative energies into useful vehicles for the transmission of certain national attributes – diligence, uprightness, selflessness. Implied in the characterizations of women deployed by these periodicals, good and bad, was an unavoidable message regarding the behavior that was conducive to the desired social order. For a bourgeois woman to hold the admiration of Dominican patriarchs, it was essential that she be obedient, patient, constant, virtuous, maternal. As these writings attest, enormous pressure to conform was applied to those who deviated.

Few did. Although the number of articles and advice columns directed at women would make one think the social order had been turned on its head, travelers' passing comments and in-depth news coverage of middle-class women's activities in Santo Domingo point to an idyllic conformity to the desired mold. Upper-class women rarely left their homes, where they gathered to sew and knit. In public, they mostly seemed to grace picnics celebrating the opening of a sugar mill, generously offer their time and money to charity, serve as "ambassadors of good will and virtue" in patron saint parades, go to church or the park, always accompanied by a vigilant husband, father, mother or trusted servant. Even the most "politically" active women fit the mold imposed by the country's elite – training to be teachers, organizing against U.S. intervention, writing inspiring essays or poems to be read by other women committed to family and nation.³²

THE CLASS, GENDER, AND RACE OF CITIZENSHIP

It would not be far fetched to assert that male Dominican intellectuals and popular writers placed the future of the Dominican Republic in the hands of bourgeois women. As biological and ideological reproducers of the collectivity and replicators of its culture, bourgeois women had an important role to play in the selection of appropriate political paths and the realignment of social forces. Their recruitment to the task of nation- and state-building was consonant with the generalized desire to position the country auspiciously. Unlike their working-class sisters, upper- and middle-class women possessed the physical attributes and had access to the material wherewithal – education, money, property – that made possible the continuation of the Dominican "race." Although obliquely, political and literary figures at the turn of the century recognized bourgeois women's value as transmitters of characteristics ascribed to their class.

32. The prototype here is Salomé Ureña, poet, essayist, founder of the first school for girls, wife of Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, and mother of Pedro, Camila, and Maximiliano Henríquez Ureña.

The need to reconceive the nation in order to shape the state, however, made necessary the surveillance of precisely these women, as they began to operate in new circumstances in urban centers. Almost as if to forestall the appearance of "unmanageable women" (women with the will and the resources to contribute to the polity in their own right), writers in this period engaged in the ideological construction of women as good wives and mothers (and therefore not as students, workers, citizens) and the deployment through literature of images of women as adversaries of men who, motivated by "irrationality and eros," subverted male agendas. Men, conceiving of themselves as symbols of "respectable manliness" and the only ones worthy of the task of state-building, were called upon to control bourgeois women so as to assure themselves the continuity of their actions.³³

The carefully prescribed roles for bourgeois women in building the Dominican nation serve as good examples of the political uses of patriarchy. At its most elementary, feminizing the nation, has been used repeatedly to mobilize patriotic emotions on "her" behalf. The woman being represented as worthy of being saved from the invaders' violations, naturally, had to be faithful, motherly, chaste, dutiful. Further imbuing politics with the rules of patriarchy, this iconography had to be made real. To belong to the nation, then, virtuous women had to be joined with respectable male citizens – quite literally, because a single woman had no economic or political space, and a very limited social space, in which to act. Indeed until quite recently and in many countries across the globe, women who married foreigners automatically lost their citizenship in their country of origin as they took on their husband's. In the Dominican Republic, marrying "well" was without a doubt a probable course for upper- and middle-class women, and a possible occurrence for a number of working-class women (who might marry or settle into a permanent relationship with the paradigms of Dominicaness described earlier). But those who failed to do so – sexual workers, single mothers, economically independent women – fell per force outside the pale of Dominicaness. In order to maintain nationality within male elite boundaries, then, worthy men situated bourgeois women under their guardianship and dismissed working-class women as unimportant to nation-building. In denying women, even those of their own class, the capacity to promote the goal of national development on their own reconnaissance, bourgeois men in turn-of-the-century Santo Domingo

33. The ideas in this and the following paragraph flow out of comparative and theoretical readings on gender, ethnicity, and national identity. See Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1989:7; Masiello 1990:31, 34; Moghadam 1994:18; Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis 1995:19; Baud 1996:145; Williams 1996:8-9. Baud explains mid-twentieth-century visions of Dominicaness as a denial of the social consequences of modernization. I disagree in that I hold that it is precisely an ambivalence toward modernization in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century that is the moving force behind shaping Dominicaness.

effectively monopolized citizenship. Women, then, became symbolic of the limits of national difference between men.³⁴

In an even more perverse twist, the discourse of progress racialized the gender of working-class women – seamstresses, laundresses, domestic servants, itinerant sellers of food or small wares, and the like. In their occupations and their racial composition, these were the urban female complements to the hard-working, agriculturally-based Dominican male, and conceivably shared the emblems of nationality with their working-class male counterparts: the capacity to work, the transparent honesty, the unwavering commitment to build a better future, and so on. As a function of their limited sphere of action, one could even argue, working-class women may have stood a better chance of preserving Dominican values for, unlike men, they stayed in the home plane, consorted only with “their own,” and returned to the hearth with the products of their labor. When they did not, however, they instantly evoked the dangers of contagion from outside sources. Insofar as they were not men (who lose nothing when they engage in any kind of intercourse with outsiders, because they cannot unequivocally pass on socially valued attributes) or upper-class women (who are under the constant supervision of “their” men), working-class women were the likely culprits (or victims, depending on the slant) of association with the feared outsider, Haitians or West Indian immigrants. Laundresses who moved freely about city and suburbs; prostitutes who offered their services to all men alike; and domestic servants who went in and out of private homes – all of whom were probably women of color – became a problematic population by virtue of their occupation and gender, and were consequently ostracized. Whether or not somatically darker than their employers or than working-class men, the combination of gender and class subordinated working-class women, and they became the racial inferiors of bourgeois women, who could easily have been of the same race/color, and of men of their own class.

The neutralization of the actions of working-class women and the insidious manipulation of the roles of their bourgeois sisters ultimately secured for white elite men their position at the helm of decision-making processes. At a turning point in Dominican history, when the most industrious and most inspired minds of the country believed that political, economic, and social change was indeed possible, limiting the courses of action to a few controlled alternatives became crucial. Targeting women, by definition responsible for passing on socially desired biological and cultural traits, seemed logical enough. Ironically, the instrumental role assigned to women in elite imaginings of the future served only to *exclude* them from citizenship, as the construction of national boundaries remained effectively a white male prerogative.

34. These ideas are collected from Kerber 1986, Parker *et al.*, 1992, Baud 1996, Smith 1996, Burgett 1998.

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RE-EVALUATING THE RELEVANCE OF JOSÉ MARTÍ

José Martí's "Our America": From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies. JEFFREY BELNAP & RAÚL FERNÁNDEZ (eds.). Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1998. viii + 344 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95, Paper US\$ 17.95)

Re-Reading José Martí (1853–1895): One Hundred Years Later. JULIO RODRÍGUEZ-LUIS (ed.). Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999. xxiii + 158 pp. (Paper US\$ 16.95)

José Martí Reader: Writings on the Americas. DEBORAH SHNOOKAL & MIRTA MUÑOZ (eds.). Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1999. xiii + 276 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

Generated by the tide of commemorations in 1995 that marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of José Martí, a number of scholarly volumes have washed into the mainstream of debates on the origins and contradictions of identities now taking place across disciplines and geographic regions. A new generation of Latin Americanists, specialists of U.S. history, politics, and literature, as well as scholars in the ever-widening domain of cultural studies, have published works on José Martí's writings and life experiences. Taken together, they represent an unprecedented re-evaluation and reinterpretation of José Martí as both a man and a myth. In general, the methods, approaches, and conceptual points of reference on which these new works rely make for an exciting and unique set of arguments about who Martí was, why he mattered and what his writings tell us about the time in which he lived and the multiple societies of which he formed a part.

Of course, these are, at one level, the very same questions with which activists, intellectuals, politicians, and general readers of Martí have grappled for years. Indeed, the prolific rate of new writing on Martí might be rivaled

only by the frenetic pace at which Martí himself produced texts. While the most complete set of Martí's essays, speeches, and letters spans over thirty densely typed volumes, at least one scholar has estimated that 140 works per year have been published on Martí (Estrade 1987). Historically appropriated by every political group of Cubans (and of Cuban exiles) from one end of the ideological spectrum to the other, Martí remains best known for his work as a key organizer of Cuba's last war for independence from Spain (1895–98). In Cuba and Latin America more generally, Martí is also known as the foremost, if not the first, anti-imperialist thinker whose critiques of U.S.-dominated corporate capitalism ring as persuasively today as they did at the time he wrote them (late 1880s and early 1890s). Yet, what has caught the attention of recent scholarship is the full complexity of his cultural, political, and social identity, particularly the context that informed its expression. Thus, the fact that Martí spent most of his adult life and wrote the bulk of his works in the United States, specifically in New York City, forms the point of departure for these new studies.

For fifteen years, Martí survived by working mostly as a writer, translator, and foreign correspondent to Latin American newspapers before launching Cuba's 1895 war for liberation, in which he died. Nonetheless, standard interpretations of Martí tend to focus mostly on his works on Latin America or Cuba, rendering his primary identity as the "Father of the Cuban nation" or the "Apostle" of both Cuban and Latin American freedom. They ignore or dismiss the volumes of material that Martí wrote about the United States for Latin America, often through essays that tried to link the two realities even as they flagged what Martí increasingly saw as the dangerous imperialist aspects of late nineteenth-century U.S. culture. In the past, much of this material, written before Martí turned to planning Cuba's liberation, appeared too celebratory of the United States and therefore too contradictory to Martí's later, more radical tracts to merit much interest. Thus, Cuban scholars like Roberto Fernández Retamar (1989) and Diana Abad Muñoz (1995, 1996) have tended to discount how one set of writings informed the other and what their possible consistencies over time were. Moreover, traditional scholars took the "fact" of Martí's claim to a Cuban identity and Latin American sensibility for granted. Whenever dominant interpretations of Martí recognized the effects of his exile experience on his writing, they did so only through a teleological lens. Seeing his return to Cuba as inevitable, such views attached little if any weight to the potential sense of permanency that might have characterized his exile condition (especially during the first several years), or the traces of an internally conflicted identity that his work belied. While traditionalists acknowledged the contradictory nature of his context and message, only recently have a few scholars such as Arcadio Díaz Quiñones (1995, 1997) and Agnes Lugo-Ortiz (1999) directly considered how Martí constructed his identity and relayed its inscription to others across discursive

bridges and textual crossroads that linked together the United States, Cuba, and Latin America.

Following in this vein are *José Martí's "Our America"* and *Re-Reading José Martí*. Collectively, contributors to these edited volumes argue for multiple interpretations of a man who strove to integrate a context of displacement and alienation with a holistic orientation and conceptual affiliation that reached beyond his lived reality. Many of the essays in these collections assert that Martí accomplished this through the realm of the imagination – by imagining Cuba as an extant nation and envisioning Latin American republics as a region with common histories, cultures, and interests. Ironically, many of these writers point out, the process by which Martí reached beyond the geographic and cultural limits of the exile experience was by chronicling events and analyzing society in the United States for a Latin American audience. However, contributions differ in their approach and understanding of the implications of analyzing Martí's works as a voice that represented marginality by resisting it.

Some contributors to Belnap and Fernández's collection seem to regard Martí as a self-consciously Latino writer rather than a Latin American intellectual, pushing Martí into what many Latin Americanists might consider unsettling comparisons. In their essays, Rosaura Sánchez, Beatrice Pita, and José David Saldívar pair Martí's work with the recently rediscovered "Borderlands" fiction writer of New Mexico, María Amparo Ruíz de Burton. Through Martí and Ruíz de Burton's works, these authors trace their common experience of being racialized into Latino outsiders and the shared sensitivity to the project and ideals of Manifest Destiny that resulted. Yet, while undoubtedly Ruíz de Burton disdained the minoritization that she experienced after the U.S. invasion of Mexican territory in 1848, her family's position at the top of the race-class pyramid prior to 1848 and her own subsequent marriage to an officer in the U.S. army seem to distance the mixed political messages of her work greatly (perhaps too greatly) from the mixed political messages of Martí's works. This renders the comparison ineffective and, ironically, the reader's understanding of Jose Martí (in contrast to Ruíz de Burton) more obscure. Similarly, Donald Pease's essay finds unconvincing commonalities between the egalitarian visions produced by the democrat exile José Martí, and the politically conservative visions produced by the monarchist traveler Alexis de Tocqueville. As a result, these works' uncomfortable, somewhat forced engagement of the historicity and complexity of their primary textual subject undermines their persuasiveness and utility.

On the other hand, the essays by Doris Sommer and Susan Gilman in *José Martí's "Our America"* offer refreshingly creative analyses of Martí's efforts to translate, both figuratively and literally, the work of U.S. writers Walt Whitman and Helen Hunt Jackson for a Latin American audience. Sommer and Gilman seek to understand Martí's writings as reflections of both an exile

firmly rooted in his adoptive society *and* a displaced Latin American who empowers himself (and his readers) by displacing and appropriating others from that society. In this case, Martí chooses others who shared with him the condition of poet or novelist. Sommer argues that Martí strategically conciliated Whitman to his own project of hemispheric, popular solidarity around the twin goals of moral gain and mutual progress by reconfiguring Whitman as an "American," broadly speaking. "Perhaps for Martí," she writes, "Whitman's ideal American readers might be stretched to mean the *camaradas* who would most readily respond to that Spanish interpellation in [Whitman's] poetry ... It is as if Martí were saying, through a hemispheric and Hispanized appropriation of Whitman, that Americans already speak the same language" (p. 82). Along similar lines, Susana Rotker argues for an even deeper exploration of Martí's work as the self-inscription of a deliberately and perhaps unavoidably contradictory subject. Succinctly put, "In the United States, in contrast, [Martí] does not try to *participate* as an immigrant who wants to *belong*: exile and belonging are no longer opposite, but instead form a dialectical tension ... On the one hand, he is an activist for Cuban independence; on the other, by means of his chronicles on the United States, ... he endeavors to apprehend the Other in order to apprehend himself" (p. 59). Yet, the palpable tension that Rotker finds in Martí's writing – between the U.S.-centered and the Latin America-centered – that she and other contributors' essays try to subvert, still characterizes the volume as a whole. Thus, Ada Ferrer's fascinating piece on the racial silences in Martí's works and other contemporary nationalists' writing (and their implications for the 1895 war and Cuban Republic) seems oddly disconnected from a volume which otherwise tethers Martí to analytical sites closer to home. Moreover, Oscar Martí's brief, provocative reflection on the posthumous mythologization of Martí into competing, often fragmented interpretations within Cuba fails to fuse the parts of the volume. Its rather unfortunate placement at the end only emphasizes the collection's greatest flaw: the reader is left with the sense that the two interpretive halves of Martí's work (that seen as U.S.-focused and that seen as Latin America-oriented) which the book serves to highlight and ultimately strives to mediate seem slightly further apart than they began.

Re-reading José Martí: One Hundred Years Later is less ambitious and is typographically imperfect, but it is conceptually better organized. It offers readers short, pointed essays by U.S. and European scholars, several Cuban exile intellectuals, and one highly veiled but provocative work by a Martí specialist living in Cuba. Beginning with Rodríguez-Luis's excellent introduction, the opening essays of Cathy L. Jrade, Ottmar Ette, Julio Ramos, and (in a repeat performance) Rotker introduce the reader to Martí's literary context of modernism. Illustrating the commonalities between Martí and other modernists' search for authenticity, these essays argue that Martí's intellectual and political outlook resulted from a conflicted sense of fascination with, and

alienation from, modernity. According to these essays, his poetry, chronicles, and political writing beautifully reflect, even document, the searing contradictions and dualities of modern life by staking out a role for poetry and writing as the means of self-discovery and cultural recovery from the margins. That Martí's consciousness of the contradictions of his own personal circumstances weaves its way into the realities he renders provides a consistent pattern that one can follow despite changes of medium, changes in time, and changes of purpose. Importantly, Ette provides an intimate portrait of Martí as a writer whose lifeblood, as Martí himself put it, flowed from his pen. Like Ette, Ramos, who convincingly compares Martí's exile poem of the 1880s with Tato Laveira's migrant lament of the 1980s, puts flesh to the skeleton of literary analysis, allowing us to perceive a historical being emerging from a deep and up-close examination of his words. In these first essays from *Re-Reading Martí*, the reader discovers a Martí struggling against schisms, real and external, perceived and internal. This is a Martí whose works, though disparate in style and form, are woven together by a conflicted logic that the reader comes to know as a common by-product of his times and to understand as a unique expression of his multi-dimensional vision.

These essays prove critical to appreciating those that follow. Part memoir, part analysis, and part manifesto against deliberate, overtly political "mis-readings" of Martí, the essays by Enrico Mario Santí, Ronda Varona, and Saumell-Muñoz are more directly targeted to specialists. For these readers, they are also the most enticing and exciting chapters of the volume. Brilliantly layering a message of intellectual dissent and a surprising personal story that allegorizes the divide between truth and legend, Santí's essay condemns what he calls the "mummification" of Martí. More than simply deriding successive political efforts to dehistoricize Martí's works and role from the start of the Republic to the present, Santí also indicates the trajectory by which Martí has been heroized by successive Cuban governments through creative means of his own device. Santí does this through the use of metaphors related to death, mausoleums, and empty graves. Any scholar remotely familiar with the use and abuse of Martí's image, especially Ottmar Ette's 1995 study, can appreciate the implications of these metaphors and the deeply contentious question Santí poses at the end – that of deciding whether or not we can or should try to locate the "real" Martí anywhere but in the legacy of his words. (Those attempting to discredit Santí's legend concerning the missing remains of Martí may wish to consult a new, definitive study on the funerary history of Martí [López Rodríguez & Morales Tejeda 1999].)

Like Santí's contribution, Ronda Varona's intentionally vague essay on the manipulation of Martí's works and figure in the wake of the 1959 Cuban Revolution calls for an end to the privileging of certain of his works and a recognition of their inherent heterogeneity. Still, Varona's indictment of the Cuban government's selective employment of Martí is fraught with contra-

dictions of its own: "This manipulation of Martí affects negatively the Master's real place in history and the culture of the Cuban people, greatly diminishing, in fact, the credibility of his thinking as an appropriate tool to deal with current problems" (p. 94). Thus, Varona does not prescribe the total deheroization of Martí as anathema to fruitful academic or political polemics as Santi does. Rather, as a scholar living in Cuba, he believes that intellectuals and activists should resurrect a new Martí, one more cognizant and openly accepting of contradictions in their analyses and debates of his works. As such, Varona's essay, like Santi's, is itself worthy of analysis and debate. Equally controversial in this regard is Rafael Saumell-Muñoz's essay, which focuses on Fidel Castro as Martí's self-proclaimed and officially sanctioned "reader in chief" in Cuba. For those familiar with Carlos Ripoll's (1994) highly positivistic and narrowly political article on "The Falsification of José Martí in Cuba," Saumell-Muñoz, who spent five years imprisoned for his political beliefs in Cuba, offers a surprisingly moderate, richly analytical, and historically grounded alternative view on official interpretations of Martí. More subtle (and in the first case, more tentative) are the closing essays of Lourdes Martínez-Echazábal and Iván Schulman. Whereas Martínez-Echazábal questions the uniqueness versus typicality of Martí's views on race, Schulman highlights the curiously distinctive resonance of Martí in the responses of working-class contemporaries to his spoken and written word. Both bring to a satisfying conclusion a volume that promises tremendous intellectual reach across disciplines, regional interests, and audiences.

If there is one conviction common to the latter two anthologies, it is the notion that multiple interpretations of Martí are not only inevitable (and perhaps even embedded in his own interpretative view of the world), but helpful. Arriving at them allows scholars to illuminate the continued relevance and validity of a body of work that chronicles multiple experiences, beliefs, and societies – real, imagined, and proposed – all at once. For this reason, the availability of the *José Martí Reader* (a selection of what are, by and large, exquisitely translated essays, letters, manifestoes, and poems) must be enthusiastically applauded. Far superior to English-language versions of Martí published in the past, this collection solves the puzzle of how to translate Martí's often circuitous phrasing without simply glossing its complexities, editing out the ironies, or remaining so true to the literal meaning of what he wrote that his words appear to lumber rather than flow. Still, the *José Martí Reader* is not entirely satisfying in its selection of texts. Although the choices of political and cultural writings (including major works on Cuba, Latin America, and the United States) are appropriate and highly useful for a variety of disciplinary venues, the editors seem to have based their criteria for the selection of Martí's epistles and poems on length rather than content or historical importance. Moreover, the editors' ill-conceived decision to retain and italicize specific Spanish words such as *conquistador* while choosing (as others have

done in the past) to translate words such as *mestizo* into the insulting term "half-breed" will distract a number of readers. Reading it, I thought of Sommer's contention in the Belnap and Fernández collection, that to translate Martí is to deform his possessive claims to power and place that his words deploy. "[To translate Martí] is to move," she writes, "from a defensive position right into the enemy's camp" (p. 84). However, if the new scholarship on Martí is correct (and the more interpretations of Martí we have to peruse, debate, and discover, the better), then translating Martí into a language comprehensible to a younger generation of Anglophone scholars surely advances that end. Indeed, one can only imagine how Martí, who spent so much time resisting assimilation to U.S. Anglophone culture by writing in Spanish for a Latin American audience, might react if he had known. Through the combination of this new, hemispheric-based scholarship and the translation of Martí's work into English, students in the United States will finally discover a bit of their society's past by choosing to view it from the angle of an intellectual who stood at its margins in his contemporary present. I, for one, am sure that Martí must be reveling in the ironic and empowering inversion of power this represents.

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BOOKSHELF 2000

Another year, another monumental stack of new books with Caribbeanist interest of one sort or another. *NWIG* reviewers have been contributing full essays on more than seventy such books each year, but that still leaves well over one hundred others deserving of mention in this residual wrap-up of the 2000 season. We are deeply grateful to those scholars who have taken the time to provide reviews. And we are pleased to announce that the 2000 edition of the Caribbeanist Hall of Shame (created for scholars who commit themselves to reviews but then neither provide them nor relinquish the book so someone else can take on the task) has shrunk from a membership of 15 (in 1993, its inaugural year) to just two (identified, as has become our custom, by first and last initials). Despite our gentle reminders, J—e F—s failed to review *The Dominican Republic and the United States: From Imperialism to Transnationalism*, edited by G. Pope Atkins & Larman C. Wilson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998, paper, US\$ 20.00) and B—a S—i never came through with a review of *Constructing a Colonial People: Puerto Rico and the United States, 1898-1932*, by Pedro A. Caban (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 60.00).

We begin our annual roundup of books not otherwise reviewed in *NWIG* with literary works (which, as a matter of journal policy, do not receive individual reviews).

Tiepolo's Hound, by Derek Walcott (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2000, cloth US\$ 30.00). At once muscular, lyrical, and playful, this complex poem (164 pp.) is vintage Walcott, effortlessly spanning continents and centuries. Narrative threads include the remembered sighting in a long-ago museum of "a slash of pink on the inner thigh / of a white hound" on a Venetian painting – was it by Veronese or Tiepolo, or might it almost have been imagined, that "sepuchral hound" (in a late, frustrated line: "The dog, the dog, where was the fucking dog?"); the biography of Camille Pissarro, the troubled Sephardic exile from Danish West Indian St. Thomas to French French

Pontoise, Cezanne's teacher, with all the related impressionist baggage, from Gauguin and his Martinique connections to Dreyfus (and Guyane) and the Jewish problem in *fin-de-siècle* France, which leads on to Sephardim in the West Indies, including Walcott's recently deceased Jamaican friend John Figueroa; the "Antillean isthmus" ("the beads of islands, bedded like the seeds / of a sugar apple in their pith of foam") balancing, like a scale, both hemispheres, with the Middle Passage never far from the imagination ("the Atlantic with its reeking freight"); the role of light in painting ("Light on the wharves of Charlotte Amalie, / light on the sparkling straits of Sicily ... the light of islands"); and over and over West Indian history and identity ("this mixed obscenity made by the two coupling worlds"). Walcott's own painting is a constant presence – his struggle to see with a painterly eye, biographical parallels with Pissaro, the twenty-six Walcott watercolors reproduced in the book, including wonderful evocations of St. Lucia, from Rastas on the beach testifying to tourists, to fishermen hauling nets, to domino players. In a separate volume, *What the Twilight Says: Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998, paper US\$ 13.00), Walcott groups together fourteen previously published pieces, including "The Muse of History" and his Nobel lecture – pure gold.

On the Canvas of the World and Enterprise of the Indies, both edited by George Lamming and published in 1999 by the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies (Tapia House, 82 St. Vincent Street, Tunapuna), are major compendia that sparkle with Lamming's generous conception of a Caribbean identity. They demand reading, studying, and rereading. *The Canvas*, with a sober, challenging foreword by Lloyd Best, brings together two issues of *New World Quarterly*, first published in 1966 to mark the accession to independence of Guyana and Barbados. The Guyana issue, edited by Lamming and Martin Carter, reflects Lamming's steady, courageous vision on every page; it includes a number of startling epigraphs from Robert Frost and brings in great Caribbean writers from throughout the archipelago – Guyana of course (Mittelholzer, Carter, Dathorne, Carew, Wilson Harris, Walter Rodney, and Cheddi Jagan, not to mention Walter Raleigh), but also Guillén, Césaire, Claude McKay, Fanon, C.L.R. James, Wilfred Cartey, Brathwaite, Patterson, R.T. Smith, Mervyn Morris, and many more. The Barbados issue, edited by Lamming with the help of Edward Baugh, focuses more narrowly on the specificities of the new island-nation, with views by engaged outsiders, from John Hearne to Gordon Lewis, as well as a strong selection of Bajan writers: Frank Collymore, Paule Marshall, Austin Clarke, and Timothy Callender, among others. *Enterprise of the Indies* reflects the same pan-Caribbean ideals, the same passion, and does not avoid the darker realities of the region: Lamming writes: "Tourism is not only our business. It threatens to be our nightmare. We are an island of islands, too visible for comfort; and small size makes us vulnerable to the most casual pirate in search of fortunes." Some

one hundred Caribbean writers and intellectuals contribute poems, essays, and interviews on a wide range of issues, going a long way toward correcting the fact that, as Lamming puts it, "Culture has always been the weakest attribute of our political directorates, and the communications media have imitated them with astonishing servility." Or, in Walcott's gentler words, quoted by Lamming, "It is such love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirlooms whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles." Both books are anthologies to teach by.

In *A Calypso Trilogy: Sing de Chorus, Ah Wanna Fall, Ten to One* (Kingston: Ian Randle; Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago: Canboulay Productions, 1999, paper n.p.), Rawle A. Gibbons harnesses more than one hundred classic calypsos to dramatize the imbrication of that art in the history (political, cultural) of the country, all in colorful, everyday Trini speech. *From Behind the Counter: Poems from a Rural Jamaican Experience* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1998, cloth US\$ 24.95), by Easton Lee, who grew up in a Chinese store in the Jamaican countryside of the 1930s and 1940s, is a series of sweet and questioning poems, some nostalgic, some contemporary, many in the vernacular, accompanied by photos by his friend Owen Minott. In his first foray into short story writing, *Shades of Grey* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1998, cloth US\$ 60.00), well-known Jamaican painter Barrington Watson pairs images with prose in the service of an insistent, masculinist gaze on women. And the long wait for Kamau Brathwaite's new collection of poems has been rewarded by *Words Need Love Too* (Philipsburg, St. Martin: House of Nehesi, 2000, paper US\$ 15.00), varied and rich, roaming the Caribbean imagination, from revolutionary Haiti to 1998 Bathsheba (Barbados) facing the long shores of Guinea.

Several anthologies of Anglophone writing. *Uncommon Wealth: An Anthology of Poetry in English*, edited by Neil Besner, Deborah Schnitzer & Alden Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, US\$ 30.95), includes, by our count, twelve Caribbean poets among the 426 in the book, each represented by a single poem: Claude McKay, E.K. Brathwaite, Derek Walcott, Claire Harris, Olive Senior, Miguel Piñero, M. Nourbese-Philip, Grace Nichols, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Dionne Brand, David Dabydeen, and Jean Binta Breeze. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, edited by Margaret Drabble (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 60.00), includes brief entries on Brathwaite, Lamming, Rhys, and Walcott, but Selvon is mentioned only under "Black British Literature" and C.L.R. James only under "Post-Colonial Literature" (two embarrassingly vapid two-page-long essays) and Caribbean writers are otherwise conspicuous by their absence. In contrast, *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories*, edited by Stewart Brown & John Wickham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, paper US\$ 19.95), is a well-chosen treat, self-consciously biased toward the

Anglophone islands but with samplings from the other language traditions, preceded by an intelligent introduction by Stewart Brown – a great gift for a friend or relative. Finally, *Caribbean Panorama: An Anthology from and about the English-Speaking Caribbean with Introduction, Study Questions, Biographies and Suggestions for Further Reading*, by Kathleen K. Ferracane (San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1999, paper US\$ 14.95), includes poems, short stories, extracts from novels plus study questions, apparently for high-school students – pretty random materials.

Jamaica Kincaid's *My Garden (Book)*: (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999, cloth US\$ 23.00) contains a few mordant pages about agriculture, gardening, plants, and one of the author's botany teachers in Antigua, but little else directly related to the Caribbean, though the sensibility throughout (whether about Vermont, or even Himalayan, gardens) is vintage Kincaid. She has also edited *My Favorite Plant: Writers and Gardeners on the Plants They Love* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998, cloth US\$ 20.00), which has little reference to her native Caribbean. *Understanding Jamaica Kincaid's Annie John: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents*, by Deborah Mistrion (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1999, paper US\$ 39.95), intended for middle school and high school teachers and students in the United States, brings together a series of documents serving as useful background on British West Indian culture. Stephen Hawley Martin's *The Mt. Pelée Redemption: A Metaphysical Mystery* (Charlottesville VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company, 1998, paper US\$ 12.95), billed as part of "the New Age and metaphysical" publishing industry, uses a stereotypic Martinique as backdrop for this "visionary" thriller.

Dutch Caribbean authors have given us a number of works. *Amor ontdekt Aruba* (Schoorl, Netherlands: Conserve, 1999, paper NLG 29.95) is Albert Helman's previously unpublished ode to Aruba in novella form, apparently written in the late 1940s/early 1950s. *De zomer van Alejandro Bulos*, by Denis Henriquez (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1999, paper NLG 38.50), is the third novel by this Aruba-born writer. *Was getekend*, by Astrid H. Roemer (Amsterdam & Antwerp: De Arbeiderspers, 1998, paper NLG 39.90), is the third part of a trilogy of novels about Suriname (and the Netherlands) by one of Suriname's best-known writers. *Double Play: The Story of an Amazing World Record*, by Frank Martinus Arion (London: Faber and Faber, 1998, paper £7.99), the first English translation of this 1973 Dutch Caribbean novel, is structured around a marathon Curaçaoan game of dominoes (with a good bit of sexual gaming on the side). Hugo Pos's *De ongewisse tijd* (Haarlem: In de Knipscheer, 1999, paper NLG 34.50), published shortly before the author's death, presents a new collection of stories set mainly in his beloved Suriname (or the ruins thereof), but ends with a detour to Martinique. *De komst van de slangenvrouw en andere verhalen van Caribische schrijfsters*, compiled by Lucia Nankoe (Amsterdam: Van Gennep-Novib, 1998, paper

NLG 36.90), is an anthology of fourteen pieces by Caribbean women (many originally written in English, Spanish, or French), all but three previously published. Finally, the rather bizarre *En de boom blijft maar geven: Caribische en Latijns-Amerikaanse spreekwoorden en zegswijzen over vrouwen*, by Mineke Schipper & Angélica Malinarich-Dorfman (Amsterdam: Ambo, 1998, paper n.p.), lists proverbs about women, translated into Dutch from varied Latin American and Caribbean sources, and categorized under such rubrics as "girls," "women," "wives," "mothers," "sex," "power," and "sorcery."

In 1998 the Fundashon Pierre Lauffer (Willemstad, Curaçao) published a remarkable three-volume, cloth-bound history and anthology of Papiamentu literature, *Pa saka kara*. The first volume, *Historia di literatura papiamentu* (282 pp.), by Aart G. Broek, is a ground-breaking history of the literature, from folk proverbs and poetry to its role in the decolonization struggle. The second and third, *Antologia di literatura papiamentu*, by Lucille Berry-Haseth, Aart G. Broek & Sidney M. Joubert (279 and 548 pp.), constitute a radical expansion of the pioneering 1971 collection by Pierre Lauffer, *Di nos: Antologia di nos literatura*. We know of no comparable place to acquaint oneself with the riches of this literature, which by the way is surprisingly accessible to readers of Spanish or Portuguese. *Chris J.H. Engels: Proeve van een dossier*, by Aart G. Broek (Willemstad, Curaçao: Bibliotheek van de Universiteit van de Nederlandse Antillen and Fundashon Pierre Lauffer, 1997, paper n.p.), is a labor of love assembling as complete a bibliography of Engels's work as will ever be done, plus a long list of articles about him and interviews with him, preceded by an essay about his place in the literary scene of the Netherlands Antilles. Michiel van Kempen has produced a massive anthology of Suriname storytelling, *Mama Sranan: 200 jaar Surinaamse verhaalkunst* (Amsterdam: Contact, 1999, cloth NLG 89.90), presenting nearly one hundred pieces, ranging from Amerindian, Maroon, East Indian, and Javanese folktales through a wide range of modern literary genres, and spanning the eighteenth century to the end of the 1990s. Also of note: Karin Boven's presentation of Iliwa Makiloewala's oral stories, first published in Wayana with Dutch translation and now as *Hunters and Spirits in the Southern Forest: Wayana Stories/ Cazadores y espíritus en la selva meridional: Historias wayanas* (Paramaribo: Department of Culture Studies, MINOV, 1999, paper, n.p.).

Dutch-born authors have also been writing about Curaçao. In *Landskinderen van Curaçao: Historische verhalen*, by Janny De Heer (Schoorl, Netherlands: Conserve, 1999, paper NLG 29.95), three historical fictions are set in different periods of the island's past. *Doelwit Curaçao*, by J.C. Bijkerk (Leersum & Emmastad: ICS-Nederland/Curaçao: 1999, paper NLG 32.50), is a World War II spy thriller, involving German U-boats and secret agents. And *Tropenzomer. Roman*, by Pim Wiersinga (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1999, paper n.p.), a more effective fiction, is also set in Curaçao – as well as Aruba; *Tranen om de ara: Een Arubaans verhaal*, by Jacques Thönissen (Schoorl,

Netherlands: Conserve, 1998, paper NLG 39.95), is told through the fictional device of the life of the last Aruban Amerindian.

On to the French Antilles. In *Le monde incréé: Poésie* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000, 105.00 FF), Édouard Glissant has brought out three previously unpublished plays dating from 1963, 1975, and 1987, beginning in Africa and ending in contemporary Martinique, and constituting "a hypothetical novel." Martinique's pulp fiction chronicler of the everyday, Tony Delsham, has published *Négropolitains et Euro-Blacks* (Schoelcher, Martinique: Editions M.G.G., 2000, paper 100.00 FF), a stylistically heavy-handed but sociologically astute analysis of several contemporary Martinique "types," on the island and in the metropole. Both Ernest Pépin, *Le tango de la haine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999, paper 105.00 FF), and Raphaël Confiant, *La lessive du diable* (Paris: Ecriture, 2000, paper 95.00 FF), continue in their créoliste manner, the former novel winning the Prix Arc-en-Ciel Média Tropical, the second being a translation by the author of his first creole-language novel, published in 1979. *Ô Fugitif: Anthologie autour de la figure du marron*, edited by Jacqueline Picard "avec la collaboration d'Armelle Détang & Claude Lucas" (Le Gosier, Guadeloupe: Carbet, 1999, 185.50 FF), a curious work that presents brief texts (and introductions) about maroons in French, frustrates the reader by its enthusiastic but amateur scholarship and its virtual ignorance of anything written in English. While the Francophone lens and the editor's sloppiness distort the historical, literary, and iconographic record on maroons, the collection brings to light several little known pieces and juxtaposes others in novel ways that may interest students of slave resistance, particularly those working in the French orbit. In December 2000, it was awarded the Prix Carbet de la Caraïbe. An even stranger volume is physician René Hénane's *Aimé Césaire, le chant blessé: Biologie et poétique* (Paris: Jean-Michel Place, 1999, paper 150 FF), which identifies and presents extensive commentary on 1319 biomedical terms in the master's poetry. *L'auteur en souffrance*, by Dominique Chancé (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000, paper 138.00 FF), is a serious reading and analysis of the contemporary French Antillean novel. Still in the French Caribbean, Richard Price's *Le bagnard et le colonel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000, 148 FF), is Sally Price's translation of *The Convict and the Colonel* (1998), which has now been commemorated by a roadside panel in front of "la maison du bagnard" in Le Diamant, Martinique.

Coming Coming Home: Conversations II / Retour retour aux sources: conversations II (Philipsburg, St. Martin: House of Nehesi, 2000, paper US\$ 15.00) republishes 1995 essays by George Lamming with French translations. *"Is English We Speaking" and Other Essays*, by Mervyn Morris (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1999, paper US\$ 16.95), is a series of brief but penetrating essays on West Indian language and literature, from McKay and Walcott to Mikey Smith and Mutabaruka. "Performance and Text in Caribbean Literature and

Art" edited by Lowell Fiet, is a special issue (1999) of *Sargasso*, published by the University of Puerto Rico, containing a number of stimulating articles about the arts across the Caribbean. In a remapping of romantic literature, *Romanticism and Slave Narratives: Transatlantic Testimonies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 59.95), Helen Thomas accords John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative* a central place in the shaping of a new diasporic identity. *A Guide to Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latino-Made Film and Video*, edited by Karen Ranucci & Julie Feldman (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 74.50), forms part of an ongoing database that will soon be available via the Internet and already includes 445 titles amply annotated by 356 individuals, with examples from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Netherlands Antilles, and Puerto Rico. *Caribbean Literature: A Bibliography*, by Marian Goslinga (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 95.00), simply lists without annotation 3500 works, including both literature and criticism of that literature, with geographical distribution roughly proportional across the region; this would seem to be the kind of earnest effort much better suited to on-line presentation (where its numerous lacunae could be filled on an ongoing basis) than to a printed book. Like its predecessors, Marian Goslinga's *Guadeloupe* (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2000, cloth n.p.), volume 224 in Clio's World Bibliographical Series, is designed for English-speakers and provides a generally useful introduction to literature about the island and its dependencies (minus St. Martin and St. Barths); 817 items are categorized under such rubrics as Religion, Geology, History, Flora and Fauna, Literature, and so on, and Goslinga provides annotations for each.

Three attractive, engaging books from the young Puerto Rican publishing house Ediciones Callejón: *El arte de bregar* (San Juan, 2000, paper US\$ 13.95), selected essays from the last decade by Arcadio Díaz Quiñones, *La puerta de Alcalá y otras cacerías* (San Juan, 2000, paper US\$ 13.95), a collection of twelve fictions by Leonardo Padura Fuentes about contemporary Cuba, and *Detrás de la mirada* (San Juan, 2000, paper US\$ 16.95), a series of interviews by Armindo Núñez Miranda with diverse members of the Puerto Rican literary world.

Turning to photographs, art, and music, we find that Cuba is the subject of an extraordinary number of oversized photo books, some accompanied by texts. To begin with the best: *Fidel's Cuba: A Revolution in Pictures* (Hillsboro OR: Beyond Words Publishing, 1998, cloth US\$ 34.95) consists of remarkable photographs by the father-son team of Osvaldo and Roberto Salas, Fidel's favorite photographers since the 1950s, combined with Roberto's reminiscences about the circumstances of each shot – a riveting read and a stunning pictorial chronicle. *Havana: The Photography of Hans Engels*, with an introduction by Beth Dunlop and an essay by María Elena Martín Zequeira

(New York: Prestel, 1999, cloth US\$ 39.95), presents striking, formalist photos of the extremely varied architecture of the city. In *Ay, Cuba! A Socio-Erotic Journey*, by Andrei Codrescu & David Graham (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 25.00), NPR journalist-literateur Codrescu and photographer Graham traveled to Cuba for two weeks of adventuring, etched here in Codrescu's mordant, ironic, often-funny, ex-Communist-inflected prose. *Cuba: The Special Period*, by Marcia Friedman (Madison WI: Samuel Book Publishers, 1998, cloth US\$ 29.95), includes photos of Havana and Santiago plus brief interviews with Cuban exiles in the United States. *Cuba: Gebogen niet gebroken / Doblegada pero no quebrada / Bent not Broken*, by Pieter Griffioen (Amsterdam: Focus, 1999, cloth NLG 59.50), offers evocative b/w photos, with only the sparest captions, taken by a Dutch photographer during several months of visits in the mid- to late 1990s. *Cuba*, with photos by David Alan Harvey and text by Elizabeth Newhouse (Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 1999, cloth US\$ 50.00), is everything you'd expect, both visually and in terms of message, from the National Geographic.

In *Cuban Miami*, by Robert M. Levine & Moisés Asís (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 32.00), 180 photos, several cartoons, and a brisk text enliven a celebratory history of Cubans in Miami and their transformation of the city during the past four decades. *Photographic Memories*, by Jack Delano (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997, cloth US\$ 29.95), includes a sampling of his justly famous photos, but mainly a prose chronicle of his life, from his beginnings in pre-Revolutionary Ukraine to his half-century of rich participation in the artistic life of Puerto Rico. In *Soublette et Fils: Photography in Curaçao around 1900*, edited by Jacob A. Schiltkamp, Ben Smit, Elsbeth van Reeve & Steven Wachlin (Amsterdam: KIT Press, 1999, cloth NLG 69.00), essays about Curaçao's two best-known pioneer photographers complement fine reproductions of their work. *Curaçao en poche (Curaçao op zak / Kòrsou na man)*, by Igma de Windt & Florimon van Putte (Zutphen, Netherlands: Walburg Pers, 2000, NLG 22.50), supplements an anonymous French-language 1872 tourist guide to the island, written in verse, with facing-page Dutch and Papiamentu translations (as well as numerous historical photos and paintings) to produce a charming new edition. In *Curaçao: Een eiland van zichzelf / un isla de su mes / an island of its own* (Zutphen, Netherlands: Walburg Pers, 1999, NLG 49.50), Carien Ariëns presents more than one hundred striking and affectionate color photos of islanders in both private and public settings.

French Antillean publishers have contributed a number of *beaux livres*, three of which involve rum, sugarcane, and a strong dose of nostalgia. *Terre de rhum*, edited by Florette Camard-Hayot with photos by Jean-Luc de Laguarigue (Habitation Saint-Étienne, Martinique: Traces HSE, 1997, cloth n.p.), consists of essays by local academics and rum makers surrounding pho-

tos of the people and machines that have for many years been producing the sweet liquid – as late as 1946 there were still 186 working distilleries in Martinique. *Le Galion: Canne, douleur séculaire Ô tendresse!* (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, paper 145 FF), with text by Raphaël Confiant and photos by David Damoison, is another in the coffee-table photo/lyrical genre about strong black bodies laboring in the canefields (following, for example, *Elmire des sept bonheurs* [1998] by Patrick Chamoiseau & Jean-Luc de Laguarigue). Not to be outdone, Chamoiseau and de Laguarigue have now produced *Tracées de mélancolies* (Habitation Saint-Étienne, Martinique: Traces HSE, 1999, cloth n.p.), a poetic / photographic homage to a range of “traditional” practices, from cock fighting to seining, from the preparation of blood pudding to cabinetmaking. And the same, indefatigable team has also brought out a highly aestheticized coffee-table book on vernacular houses, *Cases en pays-mêlés* (Habitation Saint-Étienne, Martinique: Traces HSE, 2000, paper n.p.), showing exteriors as well as a number of interiors in Martinique but also in St. Lucia, Cuba, Nassau, and a scattering of other islands – an affectionate postcarding-of-the-past gaze that manages also to be a feast for the eyes. *Costumes Créoles: Mode et vêtements traditionnels des Antilles Françaises de 1635-1948* (Fort-de-France: Editions Fabre-Domergue, 1999, paper 139.00 FF), with text by Lyne-Rose Beuze and photos by Loïs Hayot, seems to be the best overview available of this ever-popular subject.

Turning to art ... *Modern Jamaican Art*, by David Boxer & Veerle Poupeye (Kingston: Ian Randle on behalf of the UWI Development and Endowment Fund, 1998, cloth US\$ 65.50), in which Boxer's previously published essay covering 1922-82 is supplemented by Poupeye's new one on the 1980s and 1990s, is followed by 134 full-page color plates and mini-bios on the artists. *Erwin de Vries: Beeldhouwer-schilder, 50-jarig jubileum 1998-1948 / Erwin de Vries: Sculptor-Painter, 50th Anniversary 1948-1998*, edited by Lilian Abegg (Paramaribo, Suriname: Erwin de Vries, Lilian Abegg, 1998, cloth n.p.), is the best available overview of the life and work of the prolific, colorful, erotic, and energetic Suriname artist. *Herschepingen: De wereld van José Maria Capricorne*, by J.J. Oversteegen (Emmestad, Curaçao: ICS Nederland/Curaçao, n.d., paper n.p.), is a serious monograph with numerous color plates about this surprising Curaçao modernist. *Bequia Reflections: An Artist in the Caribbean* (London: Macmillan, 1999, cloth n.p.) presents images in various media by Julie Savage Lea, an American who has been a regular visitor to the island for two decades. In Jerry René-Corail's *La clef du temps: L'Amour, la mort et le feu* (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, paper 164.00 FF), ecological/radiographic art on the recto pages complements rhapsodic poetry on the versos, both straining for the meaning of art, life, and the universe.

Maria Sibylla Merian: Künstlerin und Naturforscherin 1647-1717, edited by Kurt Wettengl (Ostfildern-Ruit, FRG: Gerd Hatje, 1997, cloth DM 98.00), is an elegant catalog of an exhibition held at the Frankfurt Historical Museum in 1998, and *New Book of Flowers*, by Maria Sibylla Merian (New York: Prestel, 1999, cloth US\$ 25.00), reproduces some of the most famous of Merian's pre-Suriname (1680) colored engravings.

Guyane: L'art Businengé, by Patrice Doat, Daniel Schneegans & Guy Schneegans (Grenoble: CRATerre Éditions, 1999, paper n.p.), a decidedly French collaborative work by architects from Grenoble and various Maroons carving for the tourist trade in French Guiana, which is photographically sumptuous (thanks in part to subsidies from the Conseil Régional de Guyane) and ethnographically sloppy, emphasizes the iconographic meaning of carving motifs in an ideological move closely tied to new sales strategies; many of the recent carvings it displays were copied from or inspired by art depicted in Price & Price, *Afro-American Arts of the Suriname Rain Forest*. Many of the same materials appear in *Architecture & cultures constructives: Programme de développement pour la Guyane* (Paris: Maison de l'UNESCO, 1995), an exhibition catalog by Anne-Monique Bardagot, Patrice Doat, Guy Schneegans & François Vitoux. Both of these books illustrate modern adaptations of "traditional" art, such as folding chairs designed by the school of architecture in Grenoble, shown (for example) in use by a comely nude on a beach. One assumes she is French.

Regards sur les Antilles: Collection Marcel Chatillon (Bordeaux: Éditions de la Réunion de musées nationaux, 1999, paper n.p.), the catalog of a 1999-2000 exhibition at the Musée d'Aquitaine, presents some 600 pieces – prints, maps, paintings, clocks, and other curiosities – collected by Marcel Chatillon during the past several decades. Unfortunately, the information on the pieces (written with the usual French voice of authority) is often woefully wrong: the explanation of one of Benoit's 1836 Suriname lithographs, to mention but one example, says of the painter that "*il alla jusqu'à vivre avec les Indiens du lac Von Blommestein, situé en amont de Paramaribo et que traverse le Gran Rio, rivière qui aboutit à la capitale de ce pays, Paramaribo*" [He even went to live with the Indians of the Von Blommestein lake, located upstream from Paramaribo and lying across the Gran Rio, a river which ends at the capital of this country, Paramaribo] (p. 144). Given that the lake in question was constructed in the 1960s and that the Gran Rio is nowhere near either the lake or Paramaribo, the authors would seem to have some explaining to do.

In *Architectural Heritage of the Caribbean: An A-Z of Historic Buildings*, by Andrew Gravette (Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener, 2000, cloth US\$ 39.95, paper US\$ 22.95), an overconfident run-through of more than a thousand sites across the region also has its share of dubious historical/ethnographic information. *Case mo pei* (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, cloth 180.00 FF), with text by Myrtho & Rémy Auburtin and drawings by Claudie

Bidaud, evokes the town of Cayenne through a commentary about tradition and modernization, a number of handsome line drawings, and a brief discussion of architectural details.

Concert Life in Puerto Rico, 1957-1992: Views and Reviews, by Donald Thompson & Francis Schwartz (San Juan: University of Puerto Rico Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 34.95), presents reviews, almost all from *The San Juan Star*, that chronicle the Puerto Rican classical music scene during the second half of the twentieth century. Peter Wade's *Music, Race, and Nation: Música Tropical in Colombia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000, paper US\$ 20.00) links blackness, nationhood, and popular culture in, among other Colombian sites, the Caribbean coast and holds much of theoretical and comparative interest for Caribbeanists more generally. *Island Sounds in the Global City: Caribbean Popular Music and Identity in New York* (New York: New York Folklore Society, 1998, paper US\$ 17.95), edited by Ray Allen & Lois Wilken, is a fine little collection on historical and present-day Caribbean music in New York City, with articles by Peter Manuel, Paul Austerlitz, Juan Flores, Gage Averill, Don Hill, and Lois Wilken, among others.

A number of books on creole languages deserve mention. *Dictionary of Louisiana Creole*, by Albert Valdman, Thomas A. Klingler, Margaret M. Marshall & Kevin J. Rottet (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 75.00), undertaken as part of a comparative French Creole project linked to the Université Antilles-Guyane in Martinique, is an excellent dictionary of this disappearing language, still spoken by some 20,000-30,000 (mainly Afro-) Louisianans to the west and south of New Orleans. *St. Kitts and the Atlantic Creoles: The Texts of Samuel Augustus Mathews in Perspective*, edited by Philip Baker & Adrienne Bruyn (London: University of Westminster Press, 1998, paper £20.00), presents a set of texts from the late eighteenth century (and the early nineteenth) and commentary on them by an impressive array of historical creolists – a model of collaborative investigation. *Spreading the Word: The Issue of Diffusion among the Atlantic Creoles*, edited by Magnus Huber & Mikael Parkvall (London: University of Westminster Press, 1999, paper £20.00), is an extraordinarily lively set of papers, many focusing on the old Herskovitsian conundrum of the provenience of the “Portuguese” in Saramaccan – cases for and against Afro-genesis, Brazil-genesis, and so forth, capped by a contentious taped debate featuring, among others, Derek Bickerton and John McWhorter. *Creole Genesis, Attitudes and Discourse: Studies Celebrating Charlene J. Sato*, edited by John R. Rickford & Suzanne Romaine (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999, cloth US\$ 125.00), offers much (often technical) grist for the historical-creolist mill, with contributions by many of the heavy hitters; Caribbean creoles play a key role.

Two significant works focusing on *africanismos*: *Cuba y Brasil: Etnohistoria del empleo religioso del lenguaje afroamericano*, by William W.

Megenney (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1999, paper US\$ 29.95), is a wide-ranging, idiosyncratic analysis of the history of Africans and their descendants, particularly with regard to their religious vocabulary and its African antecedents, as seen through sacred song-texts in Cuba and Brazil. *El Caribe hispánico: Perspectivas lingüísticas actuales: Homenaje a Manuel Álvarez Nazario*, edited by Luis A. Ortiz López (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 1999, paper n.p.), is an excellent miscellany, including a long vocabulary, compiled by Armin Schwegler, of African words in Palenquero. And Mattias Perl & Klaus Pörtl have edited a collection on Hispano-Caribbean, Venezuelan, and Colombian linguistic matters, consisting of contributions by German scholars and those from the regions concerned – *Identidad cultural y lingüística en Colombia, Venezuela y en el Caribe hispánico: Actas del Segundo Congreso Internacional del Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos (CELA) de la Universidad de Maguncia en Gernersheim, 23-27 de junio de 1997* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1999, paper DM 148.00).

We were unable to find reviewers for two introductions to creolistics: *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, by Peter Mühlhäusler (London: University of Westminster Press, 1997, £20.00), a much expanded and revised version of his 1986 overview, considered by some to be the best single-authored introduction to this contentious field, and *Contact Languages: Pidgins and Creoles*, by Mark Sebba (London: Macmillan, 1997, paper £18.50), an introductory textbook that covers much the same ground, with somewhat more emphasis on the Caribbean.

We have received several contributions to the field of cultural studies. Radhika Mohanram's *Black Body: Women, Colonialism, and Space* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 44.95, paper US\$ 17.95) is a work of postcolonial theory in which black Caribbean bodies are strangely absent (though it engages Fanon, particularly on Algeria). Similarly, in the great bulk of the chock-full-o-theory (postcolonialist, feminist, etc.) essays in *Frantz Fanon: Critical Perspectives*, edited by Anthony C. Alessandrini (London: Routledge, 1999, paper US\$ 24.99), Fanon is read against an Algerian rather than a Martiniquan backdrop, with the major exception being a chapter on Mayotte Capécia, which would have benefitted significantly from Jim Arnold's insights in the last issue of this journal (see his review in *New West Indian Guide* 74:337-39). In *Colonialism and Cultural Identity: Crises of Tradition in the Anglophone Literatures of India, Africa, and the Caribbean*, by Patrick Colm Hogan (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000, paper US\$ 20.95), works by Rhys, Lovelace, and Walcott figure into a careful reconsideration of some of Homi Bhabha's postcolonial musings. *Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race*, edited by Ruth Roach Pierson & Nupur Chaudhuri, with the assistance of Beth McAuley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 29.95, paper US\$ 14.95), contains a sole chapter on the Caribbean – an essay

focusing on the women's suffrage movement in St. Thomas and Puerto Rico. Finally, *Decolonizing the Stage: Theatrical Syncretism and Post-Colonial Drama*, by Christopher B. Balme (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999, cloth US\$ 85.00), is a rich, ambitious attempt to describe what the author sees as "syncretic," hybrid processes that operated in the postcolonial theaters in Africa, the Caribbean, and India, and are now increasing in strength in "Fourth World" or aboriginal cultures in New Zealand, Australia, and North America. Caribbean examples are sprinkled through the text.

Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience, edited by Kwame Anthony Appiah & Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 1999, cloth US\$ 100.00), is a weighty tome (more than 2000 pages) that claims to be "an incomparable one-volume encyclopedia of the black world," and for the most part it is – all manner of people, places, and things from Africa and the diaspora, with hundreds of photos, maps, charts, and graphs. Closer inspection does, however, find errors, omissions, and missed opportunities – the essay on creole languages mentions neither the languages of Suriname nor Palenquero in Colombia; the article on Suriname claims that Papiamentu is "spoken widely" there; the piece on Romare Bearden does not mention the significant time he spent in the Caribbean (or the influence it had on his work). So, it could easily be improved but it's a noble effort.

Au visiteur lumineux: Des îles créoles aux sociétés plurielles. Mélanges offerts à Jean Benoist (Petit-Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, paper 295 FF), edited by Jean Bernabé, Jean-Luc Bonniol, Raphaël Confiant & Gerry L'Étang – over 700 pages of miscellany, with some fifty individual contributions on the most diverse topics – offers a Festschrift to the Francophone researchers' *maitre de pensée*. No other book we know demonstrates so clearly the profound isolation of French research on the Caribbean from that of all other nations....

Turning to history, we begin with *The Story of the Caribbean People*, by James Ferguson (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1999, paper n.p. – published in the United Kingdom and the United States by other publishers under the title *A Traveller's History of the Caribbean*), which provides a breezy but solid introduction to the history and politics of the region. There is also a revised edition of *A Brief History of the Caribbean: From the Arawak and Carib to the Present*, by Jan Rogozinski (New York: Facts on File, 1999, cloth US\$ 35.00), in which the author swallows whole received wisdom about Caribs and Arawaks ("the gentle Arawak ... the warlike Carib"), in contrast to Ferguson, who weighs it judiciously. But there are nice sections on resistance. Perhaps the "brief history" genre, for the general public, is an impossible dream.

Before and After 1865: Education, Politics and Regionalism in the Caribbean, edited by Brian L. Moore & Swithin R. Wilmot (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1998, paper US\$ 22.00), is a miscellaneous collection of essays prepared as a tribute to Roy Augier by many of the Anglophone Caribbean's finest historians. *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*, edited by Darlene Clark Hine & Jacqueline McLeod (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 29.95), collects papers from a 1995 conference, including a half dozen by leading scholars on the Caribbean. *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*, by Peter Winn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, paper US\$ 22.00), is a lightly revised version, with a new preface and epilogue, of a 1992 book that accompanied a PBS series. *Making the Black Atlantic: Britain and the African Diaspora*, by James Walvin (London: Cassell, 2000, paper US\$ 19.95), is an overview, apparently for the general reader, of the imbrication of the British in the world of Atlantic slavery. Walvin's *The Slave Trade* (Stroud, UK: Sutton Publishing, 1999, paper US\$ 9.95, £5.99) is not intended for academics. *Black Imagination and the Middle Passage*, edited by Maria Diedrich, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. & Carl Pedersen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 55.00, paper US\$ 19.95), contains twenty-three often stimulating essays, both literary and historical, with a few directly relating to the Caribbean. *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader*, edited by Verene Shepherd & Hilary McD. Beckles (Kingston: Ian Randle; Oxford: James Currey; Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener, 2000, paper US\$ 34.95), is a revised and expanded edition of *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy*, now including 1120 pp. divided into 17 sections and more than 70 articles.

Colonial Challenges: Britons, Native Americans, and Caribs, 1759-1775, by Robin F.A. Fabel (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000, cloth US\$ 55.00), is an unusual comparative study in which the author looks at British relations with the Cherokees, the small tribes of the Mississippi, and the Black Caribs of St. Vincent to disclose the flaws in British imperial policies. *The Barretts of Jamaica: The Family of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, by R.A. Barrett (Winfield KS: The Armstrong Browning Library of Baylor University, The Browning Society, Wedgestone Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 40.00), chronicles the lives of the Barretts from their arrival in Jamaica in 1655 through countless marriages, property transactions, and family intrigues, on to the final recorded death in the family in 1992. *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, by Pablo E. Pérez-Mallaina (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 34.00), translates a 1992 Spanish work that describes the lives of the sailors who opened the Caribbean and Atlantic world for Spanish empire. *Statia Silhouettes* (New York: Vantage Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 29.95) is a lasting gift from anthropologist Julia G. Crane to Caribbeanists, a collection of twenty-

two life histories recorded in St. Eustatius between 1985 and 1987, some of them reaching well back into slavery times, through the sharp reminiscences of octogenarians who, in their youth, frequented older friends and relatives who had themselves been slaves.

Racism, by Albert Memmi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 39.95, paper US\$ 15.95), is a fine translation of this 1982 French-language classic, with a new foreword by Kwame Anthony Appiah. *On Racial Frontiers: The New Culture of Frederick Douglass, Ralph Ellison, and Bob Marley*, by Gregory Stephens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 59.95), is an imaginative consideration of "interracial" consciousness and culture through the lives and works of three master communicators. *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954*, by Lee D. Baker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, paper US\$ 17.95), is an important history of the complex and often-contradictory role played by anthropologists vis-à-vis race theory, demonstrating the profoundly political nature of "scientific" knowledge. *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930*, by Lilia Moritz Schwarcz (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999, cloth US\$ 35.00), is a translation of a 1993 book that traces the intellectual history of scientists, historians, philosophers, and others who promoted social Darwinism and the quasi-sciences of eugenics and phrenology within government and the academy, and adapted those ideas to the Brazilian context. *Créoles-Bossales: Conflit en Haïti*, by Gérard Barthélemy (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge 2000, paper 165.00 FF), which none of our Haitian specialists agreed to review, is a reworked version of his *Dans la splendeur d'un après-midi d'histoire*, which argues, over a number of quirky chapters, for an appreciation of Haitian culture and identity; curiously, its chapter on music is devoted to North American jazz (and its allegedly Creole St.-Domingue origins) rather than, say, *compas* ...

Assorted reprints. *Wij slaven van Suriname* (Amsterdam: Contact, paper NLG 34.90) republishes this pioneering nationalist history by Anton de Kom. *Aruba, Curaçao en Bonaire aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw*, edited by Henk Waltmans & Geert Groothoff (The Hague: Algemeen-Nederlands Verbond, 1999, paper NLG 15.40), consists of facsimile reproductions of early twentieth-century special issues, devoted to the ABC islands, of the ANV illustrated journal *Neerlandia*. Bernard Diederich's *Trujillo: The Death of the Dictator* (Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener, 2000, paper US\$ 18.95) reprints his 1978 book, *Trujillo: Death of the Goat*. Twenty-eight years after its original publication, Richard S. Dunn's *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* has been reprinted at a reasonable price (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2000, paper US\$ 16.95). *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Families in Three*

Selected Communities of Jamaica, by Edith Clarke (Kingston: The Press UWI, 1999, paper J\$ 900.00, US\$ 25.00), reissues, with some additional minor material in appendices, this pioneering study of West Indian family life. *Geschiedenis van Suriname* (Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 2000, paper NLG 52.75), by Hans Buddingh', is the third printing, lightly brought up to date for the 1999 second edition, of this readable general account that runs from the original Amerindian inhabitants to the reign of the drug barons. In *Sur la brèche* (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, paper 145.00 FF), journalist Jacques Canneval gathers a number of pieces from the 1980s and 1990s, originally appearing in *Sept Magazine*, commenting on the politics, economy, and society of an island caught in unusually rapid change.

Several books on Cuban history and politics. In *Imagen y trayectoria del Cubano en la historia II: La República (1902-1959)* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1998, n.p.), the prolific Cuban exile Octavio R. Costa compiles a chronological narrative of the Republic, without a single footnote, covering internal politics, economics, foreign relations, and literature and the arts, among other themes. *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen Up Close*, by Charles Johnson Post (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999, paper US\$ 29.95), reprints a posthumous 1960 publication by a participant in the action. Rafael Fermoselle's *Política y color en Cuba: La guerrita de 1912* (2nd ed. [Spain?]: Editorial Colibrí, 1998, paper n.p.) reprints the 1974 Uruguayan edition of the author's 1972 English-language dissertation; it focuses on events leading up to the "race war" of 1912, in which "thousands of blacks" were killed. *Het complot: Dissidenten en huurlingen tegen Cuba*, by Hernando Calvo Ospina & Katlijn Declercq (Berchem, Belgium: EPO, 1999, paper n.p.), published in French the previous year, is an "exposé" that attempts to uncover the ways that the United States (particularly via the CIA) has controlled, financed, and manipulated anti-Castro forces both within and outside Cuba. *A Rebel in Cuba: An American's Memoir*, by Neill Macaulay (Micanopy FL: Wacahoota Press, 1999, paper US\$ 17.95), reprints a 1970 book recounting Fidel's 1958-59 Pinar del Rio campaign as seen through the eyes of an American volunteer, with new notes and expanded index. *The Kennedys and Cuba: The Declassified Documentary History*, edited by Mark J. White (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1999, cloth US\$ 28.95), includes hundreds of pages of carefully selected documents, drawn from the State Department, the Kennedy Library, private papers, and the Assassination Records Review Board. *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America*, by Stephen C. Rabe (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 39.95, paper US\$ 17.95), describes how JFK's Latin American (and Caribbean) policy ran aground on the shoals of the cold war. In Ernest H. Preeg's *Feeling Good or Doing Good with Sanctions: Unilateral Economic Sanctions and the U.S. National Interest* (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and

International Studies, 1999, paper US\$ 21.95), Cuba joins four other non-Caribbean cases as the author develops his persuasive argument against the use of sanctions. *Unfaithing U.S. Colonialism*, edited by Deborah Lee & Antonio Salas (Fremont CA: Dharma Cloud Publishers, 1999, paper US\$ 15.00), presents poems and essays, inflected by liberal Christianity, about U.S. neo-colonial relationships, including those with Puerto Rico and Cuba. In the Caribbean portion of *Voices of Resistance: Testimonies of Cuban and Chilean Women* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999, cloth US\$ 27.95), Judy Maloof presents ten- to fifteen-page interviews with seven accomplished Cuban women, including Nancy Morejón, reminiscing in 1992 about their lives, their work, and the Revolution.

Two on the Dominican Republic: *Culture and Customs of the Dominican Republic*, by Isabel Zakrzewski Brown (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 45.00 – part of the “Culture and Customs of Latin America and the Caribbean” series), is a game attempt to write a readable (high-school level?) introduction to the country. *Los partidos políticos en la República Dominicana: Actividad electoral y desarrollo organizativo*, by Jacqueline Jiménez Polanco (Santo Domingo: Centenario, 1999, paper n.p.), offers an extremely detailed history of political parties from the mid-nineteenth century to the present.

Divine Worship: African-American, Caribbean & Hispanic Perspectives, by Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000, paper n.p.), is a “Christian” overview of worship in the region by a Jamaican-born theologian. In *More Than Opium: An Anthropological Approach to Latin American and Caribbean Pentecostal Praxis*, edited by Barbara Boude-wijnse, André Droogers & Frans Kamsteeg (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 55.00), only one of the ten chapters is on the Caribbean (Curaçao). In *From Babylon to Rastafari: Origin and History of the Rastafarian Movement* (Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications, 1999, paper US\$ 14.95), Douglas R.A. Mack speaks as “griot” to very briefly recount the history of the Rastafari movement, focusing on his participation in the two 1960s missions to Haile Selassie seeking repatriation. *Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Restoring Women to History*, by Marysa Navarro & Virginia Sánchez Korrol, with Kecia Ali (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 29.95, paper US\$ 11.95), presents a couple of brief essays, as part of a larger “restoring women to history” project, with little specificity about the Caribbean. Likewise, in *Too Close to Home: Domestic Violence in the Americas*, edited by Andrew R. Morrison & Maria Loreto Biehl (Washington DC: Published by the Inter-American Development Bank; distributed by Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, paper US\$ 24.95), the three pages on Jamaica constitute the collection’s only Caribbean-focused contribution.

We tried unsuccessfully to work out a review article on three recent baseball books – *The Pride of Havana: A History of Cuban Baseball*, by Roberto Gonzalez Echevarria (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 35.00), *Away Games: The Life and Times of a Latin Ballplayer*, by Marcos Bretón & José Luis Villegas (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999, cloth US\$ 23.00), and *Viva Baseball!: Latin Major Leaguers and Their Special Hunger*, by Samuel O. Regalado (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 39.95, paper US\$ 16.95). On the same subject, *The Tropic of Baseball: Baseball in the Dominican Republic*, by Rob Ruck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999, paper US\$ 12.00), is a reprint, with a new afterword by the author, of a fine 1990 book. We've also received three fast-paced juvenile biographies of Caribbean baseball stars (all from Childs MD: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 1999, cloth n.p.), one Puerto Rican and two Dominicans: *Roberto Alomar* by Norman L. Macht, *Pedro Martinez* by Jim Gallagher, and *Sammy Sosa* by Carrie Muskat.

Several books have come out on the environment and changing landscapes. Marcus Colchester's *Guyana: Fragile Frontier: Loggers, Miners, and Forest Peoples* (Moreton-in-Marsh UK: Forest Peoples Programme, 1997, paper US\$ 19.00), an important work on ecology that we missed when it first appeared, opens thus:

The interior of Guyana is now under threat as never before. Nearly nine million hectares of rainforest, an area the size of Portugal, have been handed out to foreign logging companies ... Another area the size of the Netherlands is currently under negotiation. A mining bonanza is also underway, with a host of foreign companies energetically searching the interior for gold, diamonds and other minerals ... At the same time, under heavy pressure from Brazilian interests, an all-weather laterite road is being constructed across the forested interior to link the northern Brazilian cities of Boa Vista and Manaus with a proposed deep-sea container port near Guyana's capital ... The interior of the country has become an enclave for overseas business interests ... Those most affected by these developments are the country's 60,000 Amazonian Indians ... Denied adequate land rights and control over decision-making in their own territories, they see their environments despoiled, their millennial cultures undermined and their labour exploited by foreign companies in league with politicians in the capital.

It goes on to trace the history of these social injustices and to suggest remedies. Anyone interested in the future of Guyana – or of Suriname, where the situation is starkly similar – should read this measured, disturbing work. *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860*, by Richard H. Grove (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, paper US\$ 24.95), is a stimulating book which we missed when it was first published, but which deserves mention here for its chapter on the Caribs and the British in the Eastern Caribbean dur-

ing the second half of the eighteenth century. Sean Carrington's *Wild Plants of the Eastern Caribbean* (London: Macmillan, 1998, paper £13.50) is a useful follow-up to his 1993 book, *Wild Plants of Barbados*, and presents 214 species grouped into families, each with scientific name, local names, folklore, distribution by island, a simple description, and a color photo. Duke University Professor John Terborgh's *Requiem for Nature* (Washington DC & Covelo CA: Island Press / Shearwater Books, 1999, cloth US\$ 24.95), though based firmly on work in the Peruvian Amazon, is a persuasive plea for a wiser tropical forest policy worldwide, and has plenty of direct lessons for Suriname. In contrast, Marco Lambertini's *A Naturalist's Guide to the Tropics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000, paper US\$ 25.00), which covers tropical ecosystems worldwide, contains less than one might expect of relevance to the Caribbean. *Natural Puerto Rico / Puerto Rico natural*, by Alfonso Silva Lee (Saint Paul MN: Pangaia, 1998, paper US\$ 18.95), presents an illustrated introduction, apparently for youngsters, to the wonders of Puerto Rican animal life. *Variantes: Quelques arbres de la Guadeloupe*, by Laurent Våtilingon (Petit-Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 2000, paper, 125 FF), is a strange homage to selected local trees, with photos and facts on each surrounded by pages of amateur poetry.

Two closely related archaeological volumes: *Jolly Beach and the Preceramic Occupation of Antigua, West Indies*, by Dave D. Davis (New Haven CT: Yale University Publications in Anthropology, 2000, paper US\$ 18.00), reports on excavations at two preceramic sites, and *Excavations at the Indian Creek Site, Antigua, West Indies*, by Irving Rouse & Birgit Faber Morse (New Haven CT: Yale University Publications in Anthropology, 1999, paper US\$ 18.00), presents a careful report on excavations conducted in the 1970s and a comprehensive regional chronology for the Leeward Islands.

A publishing event: *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, Volume III (parts 1 and 2), edited by Frank Solomon & Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, US\$ 195.00), focuses on South America but includes the Caribbean in long articles by Louis Allaire (on archeology) and Neil Whitehead (on the first century of contact and, again, on the first four centuries of contact in northeastern South America). Intended as the first comprehensive look at South American Indians since Julian Steward's 1946 *Handbook*, the work is self-described as an idea-oriented history rather than an encyclopedia. On the whole, it fulfills its promise.

Jamaica's Ethnomedicine: Its Potential in the Healthcare System, by Henry Lowe, Arvilla Payne-Jackson, Stephen M. Beckstrom-Sternberg & James A. Duke (Kingston: Canoe Press, 2000, paper J\$ 900.00, US\$ 27.00), is a rough and unfinished argument in favor of paying more serious attention to Jamaica's traditions of folk medicine; it includes a 100-page-long appendix listing an astounding number of alleged "activities represented by one or

more phytochemicals" found in various plants. *Green Remedies and Golden Customs of our Ancestors*, by Dinah Veeris (The Hague: Triangel Publicaties, 1999, NLG 49.50), is a more folksy, less scientific work, presenting – plant by plant – the uses prescribed by a dozen or so mainly elderly Curaçao citizens (whose photos and mini-biographies appear here). *The Caribbean State, Health Care and Women: An Analysis of Barbados and Grenada during the 1979-1983 Period*, by Patricia Rodney (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1998, paper US\$ 21.95), is a comparison, with a feminist slant, of the ways revolutionary Grenada and democratic Barbados have dealt with women's health issues, plus policy suggestions for the future. Alan Bewell's *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 45.00) discusses, among other colonial writing from various continents, what the author calls "Stedman's 'Heart of Darkness'" narrative, which he claims contributed significantly to the public's growing concern with the epidemiological cost of colonialism.

Books for which we were unable to find reviewers include: *Puerto Rico: Sus luchas por alcanzar estabilidad económica, definición política y afirmación cultural, 1898-1996* (Isabela PR: Isabela Printing Company, 1998, paper n.p.), by Luis M. Díaz Soler, the chronological complement to his 1994 history reviewed in *NWIG* 71:130-32; *Puerto Rico: An Interpretive History from Pre-Columbian Times to 1900*, by Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim (Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener, 1998, cloth US\$ 34.95, paper US\$ 16.95), an easy-to-read historical overview; *Creoolse vrouwen: Opvoeding en levensstijl*, by Bea Lalmohomed (Utrecht: Jan van Arkel, 1999, paper NLG 35.00), about three generations of Suriname Creole women in the Netherlands; *Ideology and Change: The Transformation of the Caribbean Left*, by Perry Mars (Detroit MI: Wayne State University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 34.95, paper US\$ 17.95); *Vodou: Visions and Voices of Haiti*, by Phyllis Galembo (Berkeley CA: Ten Speed Press, 1998, paper US\$ 19.95); and *The Rise and Decline of an Alliance: Cuba and African American Leaders in the 1960s*, by Ruth Reitan (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999, paper US\$ 22.95).

Diverse Surinamistiek: In *De Jacht op Desi Bouterse: Hoe het Suri-kartel de Nederlandse drugsmarkt veroverde* (The Hague: BZZTôH, 1999, paper NLG 29.75), investigative journalist John van den Heuvel of the Dutch tabloid *De Telegraaf* reconstructs the often-sensationalist police investigation that ended in Bouterse's 1999 conviction-in-absentia for international drug trafficking. *The History of Earth Sciences in Suriname*, edited by Th.E. Wong, D.R. de Vletter, L. Krook, J.I.S. Zonneveld & A.J. van Loon (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and Netherlands Institute of Applied Geoscience TNO, 1998, cloth NLG 160.00), is of interest to historians, anthropologists, and archeologists because of the rich information on the history of cartography and on scientific expeditions into the inte-

rior, which so often resulted in the documentation of important ethnographic data. *Johan Adolf Pengel en de geest van zijn tijd*, by Siegfried E. Werners (Paramaribo: Firkos Suriname, 1998, paper NLG 42.00, SG 8500.00), is a biography of the larger-than-life politician who steered Suriname to independence, written by a former Suriname lawyer, teacher, and diplomat. Sports journalist Humberto Tan's *Het Surinaamse legioen: Surinaamse voetballers in de eredivisie 1954-2000*, (Schoorl, Netherlands: Conserve, 2000, paper NLG 34.95) is a history of the remarkable, and often stormy/contested, role of professional footballers of Suriname origin who have played in the European leagues and represented the Netherlands in international competition. *Hindoës in een creoolse wereld: Impressies van het Surinaamse hindoeïsme*, by Freek L. Bakker (Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Meinema, 1999, paper NLG 40.70), seems a serious but somewhat disconnected, theologically-influenced study of Suriname East Indian culture, based largely on the literature and on interviews with Surinamers in the Netherlands; Bakker, whose dissertation was on Hinduism in Bali, spent only three weeks in Suriname. *Truth and Justice: In Search of Reconciliation in Suriname / Waarheid en gerechtigheid: Op zoek naar verzoening in Suriname*, edited by Alfredo W. Forti & Georgine de Miranda (San José, Costa Rica: Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, 1999, paper US\$ 5.00), represents the proceedings of a human rights conference held, under international sponsorship, in August 1998 in Paramaribo, that concluded by recommending the establishment of a "truth commission" regarding 1980s human rights violations in Suriname.

Several works on immigration and related themes. *Free Markets, Open Societies, Closed Borders?: Trends in International Migration and Immigration Policy in the Americas*, by Max J. Castro (Coral Gables FL: North-South Center at the University of Miami, 1999, paper US\$ 27.95), is a thoughtful, theoretically sophisticated set of essays about transcultural migration, with the Greater Antilles playing a significant role. In *Poortwachters over immigranten: Het debat over immigratie in het naoorlogse Groot-Brittannië en Nederland* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1999, paper NLG 45.00), anthropologist John Schuster presents a sophisticated, comparative analysis of post-World War II immigration into Great Britain and the Netherlands. *American Conversations: Puerto Ricans, White Ethnics, and Multicultural Education*, by Ellen Bigler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 59.95, paper US\$ 19.95), examines the struggle over multiculturalism, pitting an aging white ethnic population against Puerto Rican newcomers in the schools of an upstate New York community. And *Identities on the Move: Transnational Processes in North America and the Caribbean Basin*, edited by Liliana R. Goldin (Albany NY: Institute for Mesoamerican Studies, SUNY-Albany, 1999, paper US\$ 25.00), a collection of solid papers based on a 1996 conference, includes materials about the shifting identities of Puerto Ricans and Haitians, as well as other peoples "on the move."

Recent books on policy and political science: *No Island is an Island: Selected Speeches of Sir Shridath Ramphal*, edited by David Dabydeen & John Gilmore (London: Macmillan, 2000, paper £15.50), collects 1980s and 1990s speeches, many reflecting a wish for regional integration, by the Anglophone Caribbean's leading international statesman – Secretary-General of the Commonwealth from 1975 to 1990 and currently Chief Negotiator of CARICOM for international affairs. *The Legacy of the Monroe Doctrine: A Reference Guide to U.S. Involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean*, by David W. Dent (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1999, cloth US\$ 59.95), consists of ten- to fifteen-page country-by-country historical synopses of U.S. policies, including Haiti, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana. *International Security & Democracy: Latin America and the Caribbean in the Post-Cold War Era*, edited by Jorge I. Domínguez (Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998, paper US\$ 22.95), includes, for the Caribbean, contributions by Ivelaw Griffith (on security considerations) and Anthony Maingot (on the devastating impact of the drug trade). *Sunset over the Islands: The Caribbean in an Age of Global and Regional Challenges*, by Andrés Serbin (London: Macmillan Education, 1998, paper £15.50), is a translation of his 1996 Spanish-language book. *Taxation and Equity in Jamaica, 1985-1992: Who Bears the Burden?*, by Dillon Alleyne (Kingston: Consortium Graduate School of Social Sciences, UWI, in collaboration with Canoe Press, 1999, paper US\$ 20.00, J\$ 841.80), provides a technical assessment of tax reforms during the period, with recommendations for achieving greater equity in the future. *Who Will Save Our Children?: The Plight of the Jamaican Child in the 1990s*, by Claudette Crawford-Brown (Kingston: Canoe Press, UWI, 1999, paper J\$ 700.00), is an augmented collection of pieces published in the *Jamaican Herald's* "Children's Lobby" column in the mid-1990s, covering the child welfare system, parental abuse, child prostitution, and other hazards of growing up poor in contemporary Jamaica. Finally, journalist/businessman Max Auguiac's *Connaître notre Caraïbe* (Le Lamentin, Martinique: Désormeaux, 1999, paper 100.00 FF) is distilled from a series of radio programs intended to introduce Martiniquans to selected islands and countries in the non-Francophone Caribbean – a large number of relatively anodyne one- or two-page sound-bites.

Miscellaneous books on Puerto Rico. *Protestantismo y política en Puerto Rico, 1898-1930: Hacia una historia del Protestantismo Evangélico en Puerto Rico*, by Samuel Silva Gotay (San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, n.p.), is the second edition of this interesting analysis of the social, political, cultural, and religious impact of Protestant missionaries from the United States in the aftermath of the 1898 invasion. *Futuro económico de Puerto Rico: Antología de ensayos del Proyecto Universitario Sobre el Futuro Económico de Puerto Rico*, edited by Francisco E. Martínez (San

Juan: University of Puerto Rico Press, 1999, paper US\$ 24.95), is the report of an advisory group of university scholars presented to the government of Puerto Rico in February 1997, with many important names as contributors, including a number of non-economists playing the role of economic prophet. *Al filo de la navaja: Los márgenes en Puerto Rico*, by Laura L. Ortiz Negrón (Río Piedras: Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1999, paper n.p.), is a theoretically ambitious consideration of the nature of social margins and marginality in Puerto Rico, followed by a few brief interviews. Luis Muñoz Marín's brief *Diario 1972-1974* (San Juan: Fundación Luis Muñoz Marín, 1999, paper n.p.) has no editorial apparatus and seems less significant than his other reflexive writings. *Puerto Rican Government and Politics: A Comprehensive Bibliography*, by Edgardo Meléndez (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000, cloth US\$ 80.00), lists over 6000 items, unannotated but arranged by such categories as "mass media and public opinion," "labor movements," "World War I" – once again, wouldn't it be better as an ongoing project on the Internet?

We have received six juvenile books from the Major World Nations series published by Chelsea House (Philadelphia), all dated 1999 and about 100 pages each – *Bahamas* (by Patricia E. McCulla), *Barbados* (by Merle Broberg), *Cuba* (by Clifford W. Crouch), *Haiti* (by Suzanne Anthony), *Jamaica* (by Frances Wilkins), and *Suriname* (by Noëlle B. Beatty). If they might be considered minimally workmanlike and aimed at political balance, they are also prone to frequent (and unforgiveable) sloppiness. For example, the "facts at a glance" page on *Haiti* reports a population of 7 million but the back jacket says that "Haiti ... occupies about one-third of the island of Hispaniola ... About 5.7 people live on the tropical island." Or again, in the *Suriname* book, Indians and Maroons are several times confused with one other, and "Indians of the Saramaccaner" tribe are even credited on a photo of some Maroon woodcarvings. Not surprisingly, neither drugs nor the largely illicit multi-national timber and gold trades are mentioned in writing about the Suriname economy today.

A clutch of tour guides, of varied interest. First two so-called "rough guides": *Belize: The Rough Guide* by Peter Eltringham, with additional contributions by Iain Stewart & Dominique Young (London: Rough Guides, 1999, paper US\$ 16.95), and *Trinidad & Tobago: The Rough Guide*, by Dominique De-Light & Polly Thomas (London: Rough Guides, 1998, paper US\$ 16.95), which provide a decent balance of where to go and what to do, mixed with cultural information that is surprisingly good. Then there's *Haiti and the Dominican Republic: The Island of Hispaniola*, by Ross Velton (Old Saybrook CT: The Globe Pequot Press; Chalfont St. Peter, UK: Bradt Publications, 1999, paper US\$ 17.95), which is weaker and less hip and doesn't know what a maroon is. The next three are "In Focus" books (all New York: Interlink Books, 1999, paper US\$ 12.95): *Cuba in Focus: A Guide to the*

People, Politics, and Culture, by Emily Hatchwell & Simon Calder, *Dominican Republic in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics, and Culture*, by David Howard, and *Belize in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics and Culture*, by Ian Peedle – all relatively earnest introductions to their countries, with a strong dose of culture and politics rather than simply tourist information. *Culture Shock! A Guide to Customs and Etiquette: Cuba*, by Mark Cramer (Portland OR: Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, 1998, paper US\$ 12.95), is a somewhat self-involved first-person account of travel in Cuba by a professor of Latin American literature. *Sranantongo: Surinaams voor reizigers en thuisblijvers*, by Michaël Ietswaart & Vinije Haabo (Amsterdam: Jan Mets, 1999, paper NLG 24.90), is a phrase book of the “my name is John” variety plus a mini-dictionary from Dutch to Sranan. *Caribbean Vacations: How to Create Your Own Tropical Adventure*, by Karl Luntta (Chico CA: Moon Travel Handbooks, 1998, paper US\$ 18.95), covers exclusively the Lesser Antilles and is more in the line of old-fashioned hodge-podge tourist guides with hotels, restaurants, beaches, etc. – perhaps it serves its purpose, more or less. *St. Martin & St. Barts Alive*, by Harriet Greenberg & Douglas Greenberg (Edison NJ: Hunter Publishing, 1999, US\$ 15.95), is big on upscale hotels and restaurants, maintains a relentless rich-tourist gaze, and misses most local life; even in its list of art galleries in St. Maarten, it neglects two of the most interesting – the Bearden Gallery and Ras Mosera’s showplace. *Caribbean Spice: A Traveler’s Guide to Cultural Festivals and Events*, by Natalie T. Pascoe (Silver Spring MD: DePas Publishing, 1998, paper US\$ 34.95), offers little more than tourist board-type minimal information.

Faces of the Caribbean, by John Gilmore (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000, paper US\$ 19.00), contains a series of quirky, largely on-target and informed essays about aspects of Caribbean life past and present, from tourism to literature, and the forces that help shape it.

We end with a glance at cooking. *Geheimnisse der karibischen Küche: Geschichte, Gegenwart, Genuss von Jamaica bis Curaçao*, by Peter Paul Zahl (Hamburg: Rotbuch, 1998, paper DM 36.00), a hip, humorous German cookbook, has recipes and sociopolitical asides from or about most of the islands. If you skip the (often off-base) cultural fluff in John DeMers’ *The Food of Jamaica: Authentic Recipes from the Jewel of the Caribbean* (Boston MA: Periplus Editions, 1998, cloth n.p.), you arrive at *beau-livre* color photos of perfect place settings by the swimming pool with recipes that are borrowed (with acknowledgment) from Jamaica’s finest up-scale restaurants. Marie-Françoise Lamy’s booklet, *Un trésor: Le fruit à pain doux!* (Case Pilote, Martinique: Editions Lafontaine, 2000), documents how breadfruit can be used for the most unexpected ends – to make wine, chewing gum, cosmetic cleansing cream, and glue, as well as a cure for constipation, for adolescent acne, and even for a poisoned dog.

We save the best for last. *Pig Tails 'n Breadfruit: A Culinary Memoir*, by Austin Clarke (New York: New Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 22.95), collects a spectacular set of memories of growing up amidst women cooking in 1930s and 1940s Barbados, combined with captivating tales about "traditional" island foods. There are memorable pages on turning meal-corn cou-cou, cooking a sardine omelet for Norman Mailer, and preparing African Chicken under his aging mother's critical gaze. A delight!

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BOOK REVIEWS

On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture. LOUIS A. PÉREZ, JR.
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999. xiv + 579 pp. (Cloth
US\$ 39.95)

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Sweeping, ambitious, and fact-filled, *On Becoming Cuban* is prolific historian Louis Pérez, Jr.'s biggest book yet. The product of many years of research using a wide number of both Cuban and U.S. sources that include archival collections, oral interviews, newspaper columns and ads, and even some work with popular magazines, Hollywood movies, and novels, this book's scope is impressive. There is rich and revealing material here on Cuban consumption patterns – especially on Cubans buying and using U.S.-made goods during the first half of the twentieth century. There are long sections on leisure activities by both Cubans in Cuba and visiting Americans in Cuba. There is useful, detailed information on American businesses, big and small, extending their interests and activities into Cuban agriculture, commerce, industry, and entertainment. Retail shops are named, individual examples abound, and people's activities and movements are stressed over government policies. Throughout its seven chapters, the book cites, quotes, and names Cuban travelers, students, businessmen, and journalists, as well as relevant American sources and voices – a practice consistent with Pérez's position that "the process of Americanization must not be presumed to have been thrust upon Cubans as empty vessels" (p. 161).

It is clear that the object of this book is not to document that, or how, the United States imposed itself militarily, politically, and economically on the

island of Cuba following the U.S. military intervention in Cuba's second war for independence from colonial Spain in 1898. Other books convey that point much more strenuously. Indeed, in this book Pérez is much more interested in teasing out exactly how a sense of Cuban nationality thrived throughout the twentieth century alongside heavy exposure to U.S. patterns, goods, and ideas, and much face-to-face interaction between Cubans and Americans both in Cuba and in Cuban visits to various parts of the United States.

There are two levels of argumentation that structure this book, as I read it. At the broader level, it is evident that the author seeks to intervene in the four decades-long U.S. obsession with Castro's revolution and government, and to make the point that such continuing scholarly attention at the expense of social and cultural historical analysis is an overly limiting approach to Cuba-U.S. relations. It is also clear that Louis Pérez, Jr. wishes to communicate once and for all that Cubans and Americans have been in each others' things (both literally and metaphorically) for well over a century, and hence that Cuba is not the exotic, dangerous, and mysterious place it may have become in the U.S. imaginary since Castro took over in 1959. Both of these are important points and worthwhile interventions on their own.

But at a more specific level, Pérez is painting a picture of Cuban nationness that will no doubt be more controversial. At his most analytical moments, he seems to argue that early in the twentieth century (if not before) Cubans in Cuba had so adopted the United States as their model of "modernity" that it was the United States – and seemingly only the United States – that served as frame of reference for Cuban renderings of Cuban national identity. In Chapter 6 ("Assembling Alternatives"), for example, he writes that "the notion of a 'Cuban-American' identity, which is associated with the community of exiles in the United States after 1959, appears to have actually originated as a condition of Cuban self-definition long before the triumph of the revolution" (p. 431). And he concludes Chapter 5 ("Sources of Possession") with an even stronger elaboration of that point. "It was to the North Americans," he writes, "that Cubans compared themselves, which meant that increasing numbers also acquired the North American sense of the Other, even as it involved themselves. It was especially important that foreigners – usually the code word for North Americans – corroborate Cuban renderings of self, for much in the Cuban version of civilization was assembled from North American sources, from which Cubans derived their frame of reference" (pp. 351-52).

Latin Americanists usually conceptualize Cuba as part of the former Spanish colonial empire in the Americas and typically underplay both Cuba's Caribbeaness and its "North-American-ness." But in offering this important correction, Pérez may unintentionally have gone too far. U.S. "modernity" has obviously never been the only important "obsession" in Cubans' national self-fashioning, as Pérez, of course, knows and as a close reading of parts

of his book and endnotes will attest. Cubans have always had a complicated relationship with Spain, Iberian "high culture," the Spanish language, and Spanish history, even in the twentieth century. Cubans have a crucial and equally complicated relationship with Western and Central African peoples, cultures, and histories – with a sizeable percentage of the population having at least some slave ancestors – and I would have welcomed more direct analysis of that in this book. Cubans have also long had a sense of being part of Latin America and the complicated balance of tacit arrogance, real affection, and bonds of connection common to many Cubans with respect to particular Latin American countries are all important factors in the Cuban national self-fashioning. I think it is even important to remember that Cubans have long shared Americans' and many others peoples' image of Western Europe as the locus of "high culture" – well into the twentieth century. So to the extent it is possible to (mis)read *On Becoming Cuban* as underplaying the relevance of other Others – other societies, other people, other continents – in the Cuban national imaginary, it warrants further discussion and clarification.

On Becoming Cuban provides a tremendous service to anyone interested in Cuban history from the turn of the twentieth century to the beginning of the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and offers an important corrective to studies of Cuban–U.S. relations that concentrate far too heavily on inter-governmental alliances, conflicts, and arrangements at the expense of social and cultural history. I trust – and hope – that it will also spawn a lively and much needed discussion about the importance of particular peoples, occlusions, histories, and connections in the Cuban national imaginary that would put Louis Pérez, Jr.'s take on Cuba's long immersion with the United States into a broader analytic context.

La religión à la Havane: Actualités des représentations et des pratiques culturelles havanaises. KALI ARGYRIADIS. Paris: Éditions des Archives Contemporaines, 1999. 373 pp. (Paper 149FF)

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This book fits within a long tradition; from Ortiz's study of Afrocuban "street life" (1917) to Deschamps Chapeaux's economic investigation of Afrocuban

cabildos (1971), scholars have shown a fascination with Afro-Cuban religious culture in the environs of Havana. Argyriadis's work focuses on daily life, politics, and religion in contemporary Havana. Her aim is to investigate the ways in which practitioners of Afrocuban religions find and manipulate agency through ritual, divination, and spirit possession.

Argyriadis views Havana religion in terms of several discourses that intersect in practice: pragmatic Catholicism, the Congo religions of *palo*, *espiritismo* or spiritism, and the Yoruba traditions of *santería* and *Ifa* divination. She also includes the masculine worlds of the secret society of the *abakúa*, and the *babalawos* of *Ifa* divination, in examining the plethora of religious strategies available to practitioners in Havana. This stated, the political ramifications of post-Revolutionary religious practice after the fall of the Soviet Union, as well as the commodification of Afrocuban religion for tourism, play a significant role in how Argyriadis views practitioners' pragmatic, economic relationship to their beliefs and rituals. Havana religion, in this context, presents a viable, practical strategy of "survival" and social agency in a struggling economic and political milieu (pp. 14, 213).

Intensely local, Argyriadis's study rests on her fieldwork in the *barrios* of Havana from 1990 to 1995. Most of her informants are women between the ages of forty and sixty-five, and are identified only by their first names. Most use a wide cache of Afrocuban religious traditions to define their religious communities and formulate cultural strategies. Rosa, for example, is a *palera*, a *santera*, and an *espiritista*. In all of her roles, she can access religious capital from Congo, Yoruba, and spiritist traditions. As Argyriadis notes, Rosa is able to deal pragmatically with a diversity of problems because of her ability to tap into these various resources. Indeed, in an almost Herskovitsian manner, Argyriadis charts the problems and religious strategies that her informants utilize in dealing with their community and clients' dilemmas (pp. 106-7).

Argyriadis gives detailed accounts of the different diagnostic means practitioners of Afrocuban religions have developed in identifying difficulties: divination with *los cocos* and *Ifa's ekuele*, spirit mediumship with Afrocuban and African ancestors, and the spiritist *consulta*. All of these modes of spiritual maintenance are negotiated as the specific situation requires. In this way, Argyriadis shows how *madrinas* and *padrinos*, godparents central to a particular religious community, demonstrate their efficacy through spiritual, linguistic, and cultural code-switching and bricolage. The formation of the individual (on an ontological level), like the formation of the religious community, relies on this very strategy of negotiating different spiritual, social, and ethnic identities (see Chapter 3, "Familles de Religion").

Like Lydia Cabrera before her (e.g., 1992), Argyriadis's emphasis on key informants and on the specificity of praxis allows her to unearth discourses that situate the amalgamous world of Afrocuban religion. The talk about the

relative virtues and problems with *palo*, *brujería* (sorcery), *Ifa*, and *santería* helps to formulate boundaries based on African and European nationalities. The exaltation of *lucumí* and *Ifa* traditions, for example, over Congo and *palo* practices by Lourdes, a *santera* and a *babalawo's* wife, speak to "insider" practices of distinction, of preference (p. 58). However, these emic discourses grow out of specific historical narratives formulated in nineteenth-century Havana, and from the pan-Yoruba nationalism of the same era (see Howard 1998, Matory 1999). Argyriadis's location of these discourses within contemporary Havana illustrates how these historical legacies of differentiation and nation-building still resonate with the formation of religious identity.

In pointing out a "multivalence" in practice and discourse, Argyriadis reveals how social identity, individual power, and community are reformulated with a rhetoric of "purity" that is paradoxically flexible (pp. 3-4, 308-9). These religious and cultural modalities serve political purposes for contemporary practitioners in that they "transform" personal crisis and hardships into "constructive" and "enriching" experiences (p. 308). In contemporary Havana, this means dealing with daily life in ways that achieve political, social, and economic agency without directly confronting the Revolution or its values. As Argyriadis adroitly points out, Afrocuban religious practices have been reappropriated by the current government as "folklore." Elements from *santería* and *palo* are reconstructed into a narrative about Cuban national culture that finds its history in slave resistance and African culture (p. 263). In terms of everyday survival, this adds another, pointedly pro-Revolutionary dimension to the shifting nature of Afrocuban religious identity in Havana.

One could justifiably criticize Argyriadis's study for a certain myopia, a failure to extend her gaze to other *orisha* and Congo traditions found in Africa and the Americas. For example, we see some of the very same strategies of augmenting individual identity with spiritual ones in Karin Barber's work (1990) with *oriki* praise naming in Okuku, Nigeria. Landes's study (1992) of *candomblé* in Bahia, Brazil also provides clues to how power, gender, and a discourse of "Africanness" within a creolized society interplay in very political ways. In a sense, Argyriadis misses the forest for the trees in situating the transformative power of Afrocaribbean religion within one city, one social context. That is, the transformation of religious heterodoxy into social and cultural agency is a process we see throughout the African diaspora and the experiences this transnationalism engenders.

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Where is Ana Mendieta?: Identity, Performativity, and Exile. JANE BLOCKER. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1999. xvi + 166 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95, Paper US\$ 17.95)

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Cuban-born artist Ana Mendieta's life and works form the impetus for this carefully crafted yet ultimately underhistoricized book by art historian Jane Blocker. Mendieta staged powerful, evocative images using earth, sand, fire, water, flowers, and her own, often-nude, body. As a young adolescent from the most elite stratum of Cuban society, Mendieta immigrated to the United States in 1961 as part of "Operation Pedro Pan" – the post-Revolution resettling of Cuban children sponsored by U.S. corporations with the assistance of the Catholic Church and the State Department. She was raised in Iowa and educated in visual arts at the University of Iowa, and produced most of her works in Iowa, New York, and Mexico from the early 1970s until her untimely and suspicious death in New York in 1985.

Mendieta's works investigated many of the key aesthetic and political issues of the 1970s avant-garde, when the primacy of painting and sculpture gave way to the anti-object, anti-commodification initiatives of earthworks and the embodied art explorations of performance artists like Chris Burden

and Carolee Schneemann. Mendieta's works were usually transient, site-specific pieces involving images of the female form, often marked by the residue of burnt ash or the dematerializing effects of waves on sculpted sand. Like much performance and conceptual art of the time, these pieces were actually seen by few people but became known to a wider public through photo documentation. Many of the photos are included in this book, and the power of the images, with their tracings of female body images on leaf or stone, or burnt into the grass, comes through even in small black and white reproductions. Mendieta is an artist to be reckoned with.

Jane Blocker's goal in *Where is Ana Mendieta?* is to take up the challenge of writing about such elusive artworks and, more particularly, to place Mendieta historically in a way that illuminates what Blocker sees as the constitutive tensions and contradictions in her artwork. She divides her discussions into five chapters focused around conceptual issues and Mendieta's artist's materials: Fire, Earth, Exile, Travel, and Body. Detailed discussions of individual artworks anchor each chapter. Finding previous critical assessments of Mendieta's work too simplistic for either essentializing her identity or accusing her of essentialism, Blocker offers a new approach by drawing on theories of performativity developed by critics such as Judith Butler. Butler suggests that categories of social identity are activated through the repetition and mis-repetition of semiotically marked actions that gain their meanings through reference to pre-existing codes of signification shot through with power.

Blocker's approach enables her to interpret the artworks as rhetorical acts rather than as art objects. She asserts that Mendieta mobilizes potentially essentializing dichotomies (nature/culture, home/exile, earth/nation, female/male, white/non-white) precisely to unsettle such dichotomies by rendering them both familiar and uncanny at the same time.

The performative approach is part of the book's strength, enabling the author to move from an analysis of selected works to broader issues of home, exile, and nation. But, despite this reach, the analyses remain paradoxically hermetic. With the exception of some reports of critics' interpretations, we hear almost nothing about the reception of these works: How did her audiences react to them? Did they influence other artists? Instead, meanings are read off the artworks themselves, through a critical approach to Mendieta's own writings, and through a consideration of Mendieta's life (and public self-presentation) as a Cuban exile.

While Blocker attempts to put these elements into a dynamic interplay, her efforts are hampered by an over-reliance on critics like Edward Said and Homi Bhabha for models of nation, identity, and exile. As useful as these models are, they need to be brought into conversation with the specific racial and class dynamics of the distinctive waves of Cuban migrations to the United States in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the period during which

Mendieta lived and worked in the United States. Also illuminating would be more extensive discussion of parallels and distinctions between Mendieta's work and that of other Caribbean or Latin American artists working in the United States at the same time.

The importance of such specificity is especially apparent in Blocker's discussion of the racial dynamics of the works. She traces Mendieta's journey from a privileged (by class and European origin) position in Cuba to a U.S. experience with racism which led her to see herself as others saw her, "non-white," and to embrace the term "Third World Woman." This embrace of repositioning, and Mendieta's pro-active, anti-racist manipulation of U.S. categories is important. However, to fully understand the conditions of reception of her work (and of herself as a Third World woman artist in the United States), we must better grasp not only the racial and class dynamics of the Cuba she left, but also the complicated racial calibrations within and between immigrant communities. The social status and power of Cuban immigrants from that 1960s wave is important here and becomes masked by the capaciousness of the term "non-white."

Blocker's extended reading of Mendieta's use of "La Venus Negra" (The Black Venus) legend, which closes the book, especially would have been strengthened by a more historically anchored discussion. Her statement that "Mendieta's choice to associate herself with the Venus Negra, with the native Indian, is a typical strategy by which Latinos define their identities relative to the problematics of race, politics, and nationhood" (p. 128) indicates the difficulty of this terrain. A color line is alive and well in Cuba, and among Cuban-Americans, and is differently constructed from that in other Latin American countries like Mexico.

What is the relevance of this book to a potential audience beyond the publisher's "feminist/performance studies" designation? How can we place this book in conversation with other books on Cuba, or on Caribbean immigration, or Cuban-Americans, or women's history? And conversely, what relevance might such studies have for art historians like Blocker who want to take up issues of exile and identity? Until we figure out better ways to encourage such intellectual dialogues, social science studies of migration will most probably continue to ignore the power of work like Mendieta's and art analyses will remain object-bound, even when those objects are always in the process of disappearing.

Language, Elites, and the State: Nationalism in Puerto Rico and Quebec. AMÍLCAR A. BARRETO. Westport CT: Praeger, 1998. x + 165 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

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This comparative study neatly sketches the history and dynamics of Puerto Rican and Quebecois nationalisms. Barreto is a constructionist in the sense that he does not see primordial cultural differences as the inevitable basis of national identity and conflict. Rather, he shows that nationalisms, and the models of identity they propagate, arise in historically particular political circumstances. Those circumstances have been similar enough in the cases of Puerto Rico vis-à-vis the United States and Quebec vis-à-vis Canada, he argues, to create striking parallels between the nationalist movements in the two places: "The point of comparison ... is to look beyond a group's particular cultural traits and to examine the processes that politicized these traits and created these movements to begin with" (p. 97). Both Puerto Rican and Quebecois nationalisms came to focus, in the twentieth century, on language (Spanish and French, respectively). Barreto attributes this to the ideological (and hence institutional) hegemony of English monolingualism in the United States and Canada. In such a situation, local Hispanophone and Francophone intellectual elites found their cultural capital devalued: their surest avenue to social mobility was to control local governmental institutions, especially public school systems, and such control depended on the displacement of English as the dominant language of government and business. The details of language politics in the two places differ, but Barreto sees a similar dynamic at work in each: "defining a group on the basis of its language promotes the group's intelligentsia" because language is "a cultural trait that they control" (pp. 143-44).

With respect to the theoretical literature on nationalism, Barreto is most concerned to argue against the "rational choice" component of Michael Hechter's "internal colonialism" theory, in which the socioeconomic subordination of cultural minorities gives rise to minority nationalisms (Hechter 1975). The leaders of such movements, in Barreto's reading of Hechter, are peripheral elites who become frustrated in their expectation that they will be able to profit from the economic development emanating from the center. Nationalism is thus, in this view, a function of rational choices about socioeconomic oppor-

tunities (p. 21). Barreto rejects this model in favor of one that relies on Gramscian notions of cultural hegemony. From this perspective, nationalist elites are counter-hegemonic myth-makers, and the myths they propagate celebrate the culture and history of what they consider to be their group as opposed to those of the ethnic group in control of the center. Yet in Barreto's formulation, the intelligentsia's counter-hegemonic work seems imbued with the same sort of instrumental rationality he finds, and critiques, in Hechter: the leaders of Quebecois and Puerto Rican nationalisms, from the mid-twentieth century to the present, are frustrated knowledge workers seeking upward mobility. Their capital is cultural, not economic, but it seems to me that their motivations, as Barreto has construed them, can be attributed to "rational choice." Note that Barreto may well be right about the motivations of knowledge workers; if so, however, the theoretical distance between his position and that of Hechter seems smaller than he makes it out to be.

Theoretical quibbles aside, however, we are indebted to Barreto for bringing the Quebecois and Puerto Rican cases into the same framework, and for providing a good foundation for those who would like to continue his comparative project.

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Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico: The Struggle for Self, Community, and Nation. LILLIAN GUERRA. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998. xi + 332 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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The transfer from Spanish to U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico brought major political and ideological re-alignments among the country's various social sectors, such that within decades of U.S. occupation the class relations of agricultural capitalism came to fully supersede the pre-capitalist seignorial rela-

tions that had prevailed for centuries under the old colonial regime. New visions of the nation and the national culture also emerged in response to the new, modernizing power, visions and claims that were themselves sharply divergent along class lines as well as those of gender and racial identification. What are the contents and contours of these differentiated notions of national community in the face of a major imperial ground-shift? How did the (white, male, Hispanophile) elite manage to substantiate its claim to national hegemony over a colonized nation whose great majority consisted of agricultural proletarians of mixed African ancestry, at least half of them women? What was the alternative or counter-vision of the peasants and rural wage-laborers in this new field of domination and resistance?

Lillian Guerra addresses these complex and highly resonant issues with sharp critical acumen and a welcome lucidity in her important book, *Popular Expression and National Identity in Puerto Rico*. In what is, astoundingly, a revised version of her master's thesis in history at the University of Wisconsin, Guerra sets up her central analysis of elite and popular "discourses" of nationhood by providing a wide theoretical framework and then, relying on revisionist Puerto Rican historiography since the 1970s (*la nueva historiografía*), an extensive "survey" of the socioeconomic realities of early twentieth-century colonial society. Though her text is generally uncluttered by extravagant postmodernist theoretical terminology, Guerra situates herself well in the range of contemporary cultural interpretation, drawing repeatedly and explicitly on methods and insights from Foucault, Said, Gramsci, and Bourdieu, among others. And while she approaches the "struggle for self, community, and nation" from a broadly Marxist perspective, her class analysis is firmly grounded in the specifics of the Puerto Rican historical experience, and builds on the findings of the major "new historiographers" such as Fernando Picó, Angel Quintero Rivera, and her own mentor Francisco Scarano.

In line with Scarano's recent research focus, Guerra takes as the fulcrum of her substantive ideological contrast the figure of the *jíbaro*, the highland peasants who came to embody the ideal, or "essence," of the Puerto Rican nation and who as a group were increasingly displaced from their social role and position by the conspiring forces of capitalist development and Americanization. In an astute reading of texts by the most prominent elite writers from the late nineteenth century through the 1930s, Guerra devotes two lengthy chapters to characterizing the self-legitimation of the colonial ruling classes in their appropriation of the *jíbaro* as the "refuge of the Puerto Rican soul." Rather than a primarily class referent, with its continuity from peasant to proletarian forms of subservience, the *jíbaro* becomes, for the likes of Miguel Meléndez Muñoz, Virgilio Dávila, Luis Muñoz Marín, and Antonio Pedreira, an embodiment of the national "spirit" and way of life, standing in contradistinction to the ways of the Yankee Other. Conveniently, and treacherously, the

rampant inequality and exploitation of the poor classes is erased through an act of idealization and incorporation. For any reader interested in the ideological history of Puerto Rico in that period, Guerra's chapters are an extremely helpful contribution.

But surely the most original, in fact groundbreaking, part of *Popular Expression and National Identity* is that dedicated to the voice of the "Other," as Guerra would have it, the cultural expression of the *jíbaros* themselves. Though some research attention has gone to Puerto Rican working-class culture of those years, and there is a long tradition of folklore study focusing on *jíbaro* songs, stories, and proverbs, Guerra's input is new in several respects. Most obviously, she is among the first to turn to the seminal Mason collections, the treasure trove of *décimas*, folktales, and riddles compiled by J. Alden Mason on the basis of field recordings conducted on the island in the late 1910s and early 1920s, precisely the period under study by Guerra. Whether or not she is a pioneer in this quest, Guerra is certainly the first to subject the delightful Juan Bobo stories and the countless peasant songs and sayings to close and intricate interpretative scrutiny. This exercise in structural content analysis (she deals only tangentially with linguistic and stylistic issues) is particularly cogent because of the striking contrast between the psychology and philosophy of the working class and that of the elite as set forth in earlier chapters. In what she helpfully refers to as "folkloric politics" and defines in terms and insights drawn from thinkers like James Scott, de Certeau, Richard Bauman, and Bakhtin, she traces the sharp interplay between transgression and complicity, opposition and ideological reproduction as dramatized in these fascinating testaments of the subaltern cultures. In addition to the obvious class ramifications of these contrastive constructions of community and self, Guerra's analysis has the added richness of being informed throughout by attention to what she terms "ideologies of otherness in the world of the other," that is, the crosscutting contention over gender and race. She clearly and unapologetically points out the deep-seated and often naturalized racism and sexism that make up the fabric of "popular consciousness," while also demonstrating the compatibility between white and masculinist constructions within popular expression and those emanating from the hegemonic elite.

There is little to fault in this formidable work of interdisciplinary historical and interpretive analysis, which is sure to help guide instruction and research in Puerto Rican studies in the years ahead (assuming, that is, that a paperback edition of the book is not too long in coming). One reservation would certainly have to do with the presumed representativeness of the *jíbaro* emblem for characterizing the Puerto Rican working class in the twentieth century, even as early as the opening decades. Guerra makes little mention of the formation of a working-class movement among the urban artisans, dock-workers, and cane-workers in those same years, and the cultural expression of

that radically new formation in the national life. The proletarian hymns and skits, the eloquent reportage and proclamations accompanying the massive strikes, and the formation of socialist and anarchist organizations and political parties bear only partial resemblance to the folktales and songs included in the Mason collections. Furthermore, those same early-century years also saw the birth of the *plena* in the national music, a genre attesting strongly to the African base of Puerto Rican popular expression and more squarely in the tradition of *bomba* music and dance than the Spanish-derived forms of the peasant *décima* and *aguinaldo*. Despite her inclusion of the vexing issue of "race" in her theoretical exposition, and identification of racializing themes in the popular discourse, the dynamic relation between these diverse and often contrasting expressive heritages goes unexplored.

But while such shortcomings are of importance for a full, integral critique, they do little to detract from the immense value of Guerra's contribution to the study of national and popular culture under direct colonial conditions, in Puerto Rico and elsewhere. The potential application of *Popular Expression and National Identity* for contemporary cultural studies is vast, and the example it sets for future research and writing is most suggestive and illuminating.

What It Means to Be a Man: Reflections on Puerto Rican Masculinity.
 RAFAEL L. RAMÍREZ. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999. xv + 139 pp. (Cloth US\$ 48.00, Paper US\$ 17.00)

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Rafael Ramírez has made a daring foray into uncharted territory with this new book. His unapologetic use and critique of feminist theory and his blunt discussions of both male exercise of power through sexual domination and the burdensome gender-role pressures with which Puerto Rican men struggle are unique among male academics studying Puerto Rico. Still more striking is his analysis of the urban male homosexual *ambiente* on the island – one of a bare handful in academic Puerto Rican publications, even seven years after the book's original publication in Spanish (*Dime capitán: Reflexiones sobre la masculinidad*, 1993). Indeed, it is no surprise that Ramírez only published such a risky work after retiring as a respected professor emeritus of anthro-

pology at the University of Puerto Rico. Despite some significant flaws, this will remain an important book for some time to come for anyone interested in Caribbean sexuality and gender identities.

Ramírez devotes two full chapters to distinguishing between "machismo, a term that presumes to be a concept" (p. 7), and masculinity, a category of identity which he insists is key to the daily workings of power in any society. He blasts mid-twentieth-century U.S. social scientists and their colonial followers for inventing a tragically long-lived stereotype of Puerto Rican machismo, marked by crude, over-sexed, violent behavior. This literature based its sweeping generalizations upon scattered individual plebeian cases, and its medicalized, heavily psychological analytical framework failed to account for the social and historical conditions which may have helped produce particular male actions. Ramírez also criticizes Puerto Rican feminists, some of whom he claims picked up the term "machismo" in the 1970s and 1980s to use relatively uncritically in their critique of male dominance in Puerto Rican society. He argues that such feminist social science ultimately reproduced the problems of its predecessors by asserting a homogeneous masculine experience and values and by emphasizing solely the "pathological" or destructive aspects of masculinity. While rejecting machismo as a useful analytical category, Ramírez sees more hope in the concept of masculinity, the ground work for which was established by U.S. feminist anthropological theories of gender construction generated during the 1970s and 1980s.

Ramírez's anti-imperialist critique of the origins of the 1950s and 1960s "machismo" sociological literature is illuminating. However, his argument remains a bit thin, based as it is on only a handful of authors, without any comparative discussion in the notes. This may simply reflect the small size of the original sociological literature on Puerto Rican machismo, but if this is so, Ramírez has not convincingly traced how such a tiny group eventually exercised such overweening power in academic circles. This is particularly telling in his superficial treatment of Puerto Rican feminist social scientists; his critique, although valid, of only three authors cannot account for the diversity of approaches in the feminist intellectual explosion on the island during the 1980s. Ramírez's argument would have been significantly strengthened if he had placed the early Puerto Rican machismo literature in its broader historical context, comparing it particularly to the plethora of studies which appeared on Mexico. This comparative silence is particularly striking, considering that Oscar and Ruth Lewis, two of the pioneering social scientists in the analysis of Mexican machismo, later went on to elaborate their theories of the "culture of poverty" in studies of Puerto Rican slum residents.

Ramírez's reflections on masculinity and its workings are quite interesting. He asserts that genitally-centered sexual domination and competition is a cornerstone of male understandings and experiences of power. Ramírez

points out the importance of sexual conquest of women to Puerto Rican men – by now a mantra of much feminist scholarship – but he insists that this cannot be reduced to simple patriarchal behavior. Rather, a mark of a real man in Puerto Rico is to ensure his female sexual partners' pleasure. Ultimately, though, male power is not concerned with women, but with other men; in the most important spheres of power, women are not present. "In the framework of our subjectivity, we men do not compete with women" (p. 64). Men constantly verbally and physically compete with each other, expressing these struggles through a secret male language of jokes, ripostes, and physical acts often concentrated on the penis as the center of vigor and male power. Working-class men express this focus on the penis more openly than those of more "respectable" social strata, but all men share a common concern with sexual prowess and penile size.

For Ramírez, homosocial interaction is key to Puerto Rican power relations. Thus, it is a logical step for him to discuss male homosexuality as a central part of dominant norms of masculinity. In Ramírez's analysis, the *ambiente* is neither a safe, egalitarian space, effectively free of hegemonic ideas of maleness, as some gay activists might like to posit, nor its binary opposite. Rather, in Puerto Rico, homosexuality and heterosexual norms permeate and constitute each other. Indeed, in the complex sexual identities and relationships which they construct, he argues that the men who constitute the *ambiente* reproduce an exaggerated form of the dominant code of masculinity: "The same power that devalues ... women and homosexuals is eroticized in male-male sexual intercourse and becomes the base on which homoeroticism is constructed" (p. 95).

Ramírez's keen sense of the workings of hierarchy and domination provides innovative insights into the daily, intimate power struggles between men and poses a revolutionary challenge to popular understandings of homosexuality in Puerto Rico. In the end, however, his analysis tends to relegate women to passivity, or even irrelevance. It seems to me that such a conceptual move is unnecessary; male power can be constituted on many fronts simultaneously. Practices of male domination can be formed out of a perceived need to control women and their assertions of autonomy *as well as* from men's relationships with each other. In addition, as recent feminist historical scholarship has begun to point out, the absence of women from key male arenas of power has not simply happened by chance – it has been the product of an ongoing struggle to exclude them. This struggle has been crucial to the historical construction of male power and the very discourses which Ramírez analyzes so insightfully. In addition, Ramírez's emphasis on an alleged common set of internalized social expectations and a shared masculine language of bonding and competition overshadows his periodic assertions that men of different classes express their masculinity differently. As a result, he at times veers dangerously close to repeating the errors of the machismo scholars of

whom he is so contemptuous, positing a pan-Puerto Rican masculine experience. Interestingly, this is not nearly so problematic in his chapter on the *ambiente*, in which he consistently details the diversity of male-male sexual identity construction.

Finally, Ramírez's methodology is one huge question mark. He appears not to have done any systematic study of his own; he alludes to the burning need for publication on this matter before such large-scale research could be carried out. Instead, he seems to have based his conclusions about broader Puerto Rican male identity on his own individual personal experiences and observations, making this an amalgam of academic inquiry and personal essay. This is certainly a legitimate enterprise – indeed, authors such as Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá and José Luis González have made the personal essay as social commentary into a compelling genre in Puerto Rican letters – but Ramírez never directly addresses this or any of the other unanswered methodological questions that haunt his book. What has his own class, race, and sexual orientation trajectory been over the last forty years? How has he gotten all of his rich information on the *ambiente*? As a participant himself? From informants? How many? What kinds of interviews have been carried out, if any? Without answers to these questions, it is difficult to evaluate the legitimacy of his sweeping arguments.

For all its shortcomings, though, this is a compelling work, accessible to a broader reading public as well as fruitful for academics. Ramírez rages against the restricted social spaces to which Puerto Rican men, particularly those of the *ambiente*, are submitted, and which they unwittingly help reproduce. He analyzes popular street language about peeing and penises with good humor and ironic appreciation. He takes a clear stance against male dominance of women. In the end, despite his political commitment to reconstructing masculinity in a more egalitarian form, Ramírez paints an extremely sobering picture. He holds out little hope for the possibility of building trusting alliances either among men or between women and men, as long as masculine identities depend so profoundly upon hierarchical competition. He refuses to posit a positive vision toward which to work, although he certainly recognizes the need for one. Perhaps that will be the next project – we would all do well to watch for his thoughts on the matter.

Imposing Decency: The Politics of Sexuality and Race in Puerto Rico, 1870-1920. EILEEN J. SUÁREZ FINDLAY. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1999. xii + 316 pp. (Cloth US\$ 54.95, Paper US\$ 18.95)

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For decades feminist scholars working on the relationship of knowledge and power in Puerto Rico have had to contend with a dearth of studies focusing on gender, race, and sexuality. As many of them have noted, this weakness in the literature reflects limitations in theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of colonialism, slavery, and nation-building. In this context, Eileen Suárez Findlay's *Imposing Decency* is a most welcome addition. She addresses these limitations by engaging in a discursive analysis and interpretation of court testimonies, oral narratives, newspaper accounts, and other written sources. In the process, she elucidates how power, sexual politics, racial identities and nation-building are intricately bound together.

The work is firmly situated in a particular time and place, and the dates (1870-1920) are critical. Puerto Rico's social landscape was being radically transformed as enslaved laborers were freed in 1873. A system of debt peonage was also being challenged by an increasingly politicized labor force. Political parties were deploying discursive practices and promoting the development of racist social practices to create a modern nation under Spanish colonial rule. Efforts were also underway to curtail Afro-Puerto Rican political activism and the emergence of feminist movements under the guise of liberal reform. Finally, the Spanish authorities and the Puerto Rican polity had to confront the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico and the imposition of a new colonial order.

The place, too, is critical. Ponce, considered to be the island's second city, had an economic base that reflected the growth and demise of slave-based sugar plantations. In 1860, more than 50 percent of its population consisted of enslaved and free people of African descent. The availability of primary and secondary sources there facilitated the analysis and reinterpretation of social relations in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Puerto Rico.

Chapter 1 focuses on a code of honor that is embodied in social practice. By drawing from court testimonies, Findlay demonstrates how individuals of varied social standing interpreted and acted upon these codes differently. She also elucidates the ways in which negative ascriptions mapped onto the Afro-

Puerto Rican female body were invoked to encourage the sexual surveillance of all women. Moral codes of honor and respectability had a material and social effect on a woman's well-being. Despite this, elite and plebeian women challenged in subtle, overt, and often problematic ways the control exercised over their bodies.

While some women sought to distance themselves from the negative ascriptions associated with blackness, others insisted on their right to social recognition and dignity without denying their African heritage. This was easier said than done in a milieu where social reform involved the careful subordination of people of African descent. Findlay elaborates upon this in her analysis of the machinations of liberal reformers and bourgeois feminists as they gave birth to the great Puerto Rican family, *la gran familia puertorriqueña*. Findlay aptly notes: "The de-Africanized male fraternity of *la gran familia* was to be built through the reconstituted moral energies of loving, faithful white wives and mothers" (p. 59). This foundation she argues, was also built by bourgeois feminists who were not able to align themselves with their darker-skinned and poorer female counterparts.

Chapter 3 focuses on the exercise of power and authority over working and poor women. In the late nineteenth century, Ponce experienced an economic downturn. As day laborers moved into the coastal areas in search of employment, the state and many of its citizens became concerned with vagrancy. Once again, by drawing upon moral codes and notions of social uplift, institutional mechanisms were created to cleanse the city's streets, to impose decency. In this chapter, Findlay examines the regulation of prostitution and the daily struggles of women who came to symbolize social chaos and moral decay. Laws that supported the surveillance, regulation, and violation of poor black women's bodies through "hygienic and medical" practices, she notes, had a profound impact on social relations in the communities under study. Here she forcefully argues how these political discourses and practices were intended to incorporate male Afro-Puerto Rican artisans in *la gran familia* as long as they distanced themselves from the legacy of slavery, their blackness, and by extension black women. The varied responses to this nation-building effort by an increasingly politicized laboring class are then articulated.

Following the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico, the elite liberal project toward social reform on the island was curtailed. The fourth chapter demonstrates how U.S. colonial officials sought to modernize and civilize the Puerto Rican masses through moral reform. Findlay analyzes the institutionalization of marriage and divorce. In this new colonial context, women petitioned the courts in cases of abandonment and infidelity. The outcome of their petitions varied. While some advances were made, women were still subject, if not to the state's authority, then to their husband's, via the development of institutions such as the *Casa de Beneficiencia*, an asylum for wayward women.

With the acceleration of proletarianism under U.S. colonial rule, labor movements organized in earnest. Women became even more active in the labor force and in the political arena. However, working-class and elite men still held onto a male-defined social order. In the early years of World War I, women worked to create institutional changes. However, the colonial authorities, with support from various sectors of the society, activated anti-prostitution laws and launched other repressive campaigns similar to those underway in the United States. These measures undermined an emancipatory project for all Puerto Rican women. In short, Findlay cogently argues that the legacy of racializing practices and sexual norms in the formation of the colonial state persisted in complex, sometimes subtle and sometimes not-so subtle ways, despite emergent ideological and political shifts in early twentieth-century Puerto Rico.

Fronteras en conflicto: Guerra contra las drogas, militarización y democracia en el Caribe, Puerto Rico y Vieques. HUMBERTO GARCÍA MUÑIZ & JORGE RODRÍGUEZ BERUFF (Coordinadores). San Juan: Red Caribeña de Geopolítica, Seguridad Regional y Relaciones Internacionales, afiliada al Proyecto ATLANTEA, 1999. 211 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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One of the first elements that caught my attention in this book was its title. "Frontiers in conflict" led me to believe that the frontier, both as a concept and an empirical reality, would be the element linking together the four essays about drugs, militarization, and democracy. However, the concept of frontier is not included at all, and one has to wait until the second of its four chapters to find mention of the fact that concern about drugs has reevaluated the Caribbean (including Puerto Rico) as a "second frontier" of the United States – after the Mexican one – through which drug trafficking has gained importance. In order to fight this menace in the Caribbean, the U.S. government has resorted to the same policy of militarization already developed toward its southwest border. In fact, the main objective of the book is to demonstrate how the process is developing and what its implications are for democracy in Puerto Rico and Vieques. In this sense, the second chapter, by Rodríguez

Beruff, accurately deals with the objective of the book and is perhaps the best and most extensively researched in it, with the other three appearing to have been written to supplement his findings.

Thus, for example, García Muñiz and Betsaida Vélez Natal, authors of the third chapter, draw the outline of what might constitute a study of the changes in the American Law of Posse Comitatus during the last decades, and the impact that these changes have on the small Caribbean states. Good questions are posed but left unanswered. In the same vein, the first chapter (by García Muñiz) defines the most important present threat to U.S. security as being intra-hemispheric and transnational, originating within the United States in the form of a demand for drugs. Though this perceptive assertion could have led to a discussion linking it with the new literature on regional security in the Americas or the current debates in international relations and political sociology about the role of regional integration on military expenses and of armed forces in the future, García Muñiz only sketches its effects on the Caribbean nations and Puerto Rico – effects that can be summarized as affecting their sovereignty both by organized crime and by U.S. military or economic penetration presented as aid to fight drug trafficking. It is not necessary to discuss theory to make a point such as that, but the complexity of a development in which the armed forces apparatus of the United States has moved from the cold war, with its international threat, to the present situation in which the main threat is partially located within its borders is ignored by García Muñiz.

Rodríguez Beruff's chapter about the impact of militarization on democracy in Puerto Rico centers on the analysis of three processes: the expansion of the police force and its militarization in Puerto Rico; the new measures imposed by the United States in order to fight drug trafficking in the island; and the transfer to Puerto Rico of the military South Command, previously located in Panama. For him, the three are the result of the position taken by both local and federal governments on the island, a position similar to the "low intensity war" conducted by the United States in Central America during the 1980s. In this sense he warns about the lack of "democratic control" of these processes, meaning not only military subordination to civilian governments but also some form of civilian control of military activities, which, according to him, is the missing factor in Puerto Rico as in all the rest of the Caribbean and Latin America.

The final chapter, by Juan A. Giusti Cordero, presents a comparison of Vieques with other American armed forces areas of training and bombing, prepared in answer to the Navy Report, "The National Security Need for Vieques" (1999). This long and well documented essay makes extensive use of information compiled by the U.S. Navy in its own report in order to show its deficiencies and the points that have not been included. Nowhere, however, is there any mention of the relationship between the conflict over military practices in Vieques and the "second frontier" thesis presented by Rodríguez

Beruff. In fact, Giusti Cordero is more concerned with environmental and cultural factors than with the impact of militarization upon the Caribbean.

With the caveats mentioned above, I see this book as an interesting addition to the field of empirical studies about the impact of the United States on change in the Caribbean, and especially about the long-standing question of the role and place of Puerto Rico within the regional security structure.

Fire from the Mountain: The Tragedy of Montserrat and the Betrayal of its People. POLLY PATTULLO. London: Constable, 2000. xvii + 217 pp. (Paper £9.99)

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After Hurricane Hugo smashed their island in mid-September, 1989, beleaguered Montserratians described themselves as having returned to the “kerosene age.” How could they have known then that in mid-July 1995, steam would begin venting from the volcanic summit of the Soufrière Hills in the southeastern part of Montserrat, leading to the catastrophic chain of events that followed? In the next three years the volcano erupted a number of times, notably on June 25, 1997, when a “pyroclastic flow” of hot rock, ash, and superheated gas killed nineteen people. By mid-1999, the southern half of the island – including the capital town of Plymouth, buried in ash and rock – had been evacuated, and roughly two-thirds of Montserrat’s pre-eruption population of over 10,000 had departed altogether. The ongoing story of Montserrat’s eruption and the questions about its future provide a fascination tinged with wariness for all residents of the volcanic arc of the eastern Caribbean who wonder if it also could happen to them.

Polly Pattullo, a journalist who writes for the *Guardian* and well-known among Caribbeanists for her trenchant survey of the region’s tourist industry (1996), has written an excellent and timely descriptive analysis of the Montserrat disaster so far. She has interviewed, in both Montserrat and England, the eruption’s witnesses and victims. Her personal interviews and archival research provide pithy quotes and commentary from teachers, farmers, relief workers, vulcanologists, politicians, poets, policemen, development administrators, clergy, travel agents, tradesmen, and children that fairly crackle with on-the-spot authenticity. Large-scale maps and a useful chronology of events

at the front help readers keep track of the dates and descriptions in the text itself. And a useful glossary at the back defines volcanic terms. A series of remarkable photos in the middle of the book illustrate the eruption, its effects so far, and key personalities associated with the event. In short, *Fire from the Mountain* is attractive, readable, and stimulating, a paperback you can put into the hands of undergraduates to convince them of life beyond the internet.

After describing the eruptions, Pattullo proceeds, in the middle chapters, to tell of the measures taken by various British governmental relief agencies to alleviate suffering and provide help. The volcano exposed many of the problems deriving from Montserrat's ambivalent political status as a Dependent Territory of Britain. Politicians on both sides of the Atlantic exerted uncertain authority and uttered unhelpful pronouncements. A clumsy regional relief bureaucracy, with planning, financial, and operational responsibilities divided among several agencies, both government and private, and located in different places, was notably maladroit: "The result of this extraordinary mish-mash of structures – in Whitehall, Barbados, and Montserrat – was inefficiency and delay in the delivery of support and aid" (p. 143). When relief housing finally arrived, it came in the form of spartan, pre-fabricated, barracks-type housing for people who had been forced out of their individual dwellings, and it is painful to read about the sadness, lack of privacy, and anger that local relocation produced. Although Pattullo discusses these trying experiences and more, it is to her credit that – despite the somewhat misleading inclusion of the word "betrayal" in the subtitle – she never lapses into indignant ranting and never places blame for the human suffering that the volcano has so far produced.

The majority of Montserratians have now departed, many to Antigua, a few to other islands, but more to the United Kingdom (pp. 157-58). In the latter chapters Pattullo tells mainly of the experiences of those Montserratians who have headed for the London area, a story made particularly poignant by being seen through the eyes of her informants. The familiar experiences of earlier West Indian migrants to England are retold here. The Montserratians were initially unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the impersonality, high prices, and strange foods. Well-meaning welfare officials who had never heard of Montserrat reinforced their malaise. But occasional kindnesses, often from other West Indians who had come in previous years, have since helped ease the pain of resettlement, and, as usual, it is the young people who seem to be making the most of it. This part of Pattullo's book would be stronger had she augmented and compared her findings with those from standard academic treatises on the earlier West Indian migrations to the United Kingdom, such as the studies by Ceri Peach, Sheila Patterson, and Elizabeth Thomas-Hope.

The last chapter continues one of the book's earlier threads and provides a well-documented discussion of earthquakes and eruptions in Caribbean history that draws parallels with current events. At this writing the volcano is quiet

and closely monitored by scientists. The few thousand Montserratians still on the island contemplate a precarious future, perhaps based on an adventurous ecotourism. Further eruptions could send all of them away, making Montserrat the first Caribbean society in recorded history driven from its home country by a natural disaster. The Montserrat saga, still widely ignored and only vaguely known at a global level, ultimately reminds all Caribbean peoples of the costs and uncertainties of inhabiting tiny islands that are so often visited by catastrophic geophysical events. Pattullo's fine work in progress deserves a wide readership because it reinforces this latter point and tells us a great deal about how people cope with disaster.

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Between Father and Son: Family Letters. V.S. NAIPAUL (edited by GILLON AITKEN). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000. xi + 297 pp. (Cloth US\$ 26.00)

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In 1949, when he was seventeen years old, Vido wrote to his sister Kamla, then studying at Benares Hindu University, that there is "so overpoweringly much" suffering, that "the world is dying – Asia today is only a primitive manifestation of a long-dead culture; Europe is battered into a primitivism by material circumstances; America is an abortion." This arresting passage, early in *Between Father and Son* (p. 9), introduces us to a familiar figure: V.S. Naipaul, who, although still a teenager, reveals both his literary precociousness and what is already one of the darker visions in contemporary Western literature.

Leaving home for the first time, on a Trinidad government scholarship to study at Oxford, Vidia (Vido to his family) Naipaul finds some solace for his palpable loneliness (as well as one means of meeting his family responsibilities) in the regular exchange of letters with his father, Seepersad (Pa), his sister Kamla, and "Everybody" else. This volume is a collection of those letters,

from 1950 to 1953 – with a handful from 1949 and between 1953 (when Seepersad dies) and 1957, to other family members. Gillon Aitken, Naipaul's long time editor, compiled and arranged the letters skillfully, even as he feels free to editorialize that Trinidad suffers from the "limitations of a narrow and backward island society" (p. viii). Well, at least this perspective is consistent with the author's.

Of the seven Naipaul siblings, Vidia and Kamla are the closest in age and apparently in affection, and a significant portion of the volume is of letters between them. The title is therefore curious in its emphasis. The reason, perhaps, was to highlight the struggles and sensibilities of writers – the frustrations and aspirations shared by both father and son. Literary ambitions are much of what Pa and Vidia write to each other about, as each cheers the other on through the hardships of writing (lack of time, energy, and access to typewriters, insecurities about quality), even as both hope for success. With Kamla, Vidia is more frank about personal issues (girlfriends, the burden of expectations of family support). His measured tone with his father seems meant to reassure as well as to shield, a rare tenderness from Vidia which he sustains in his much later fictional tribute to Seepersad, *A House for Mr. Biswas*.

One does not have to read too scrupulously between the lines to ascertain the volume's major themes. Poignant is the disappointed but animate ambition of Seepersad, toiling as a journalist for the *Trinidad Guardian* and working at creative writing during off hours; sad is the arrogantly self-protective insecurity of Vidia the aspiring author. Father and son, each sees himself in the other, each sees the successful writer mirrored in the other, each reassures the other that everything will all work out well.

There is the sense that both felt like outsiders in their own society, which may have given them the desire and the distance to write about it. Vidia's apparent alienation comes up repeatedly: to Kamla, 1951, "the majority of the students here [Oxford] are very stupid" (p. 57); to Pa, 1953, "Of course there are many Trinidadians at Oxford, but their ignorance and stupidity remain as impregnable as ever" (p. 235); to Everybody, 1950, Christmas "was always so much of a glorious feeling of fun we felt existed somewhere, but we could never feel where it was. We were always on the outside of a vague feeling of joy. The same feeling is here with me in London" (p. 41); to Pa, 1953, "The gulf that I felt between people and myself at home – people called me conceited, you remember – has grown wider ... it seems difficult to me to find a society to which I could belong, without effort" (pp. 263, 264). It is tempting to surmise that Vidia is suffering from low self-esteem yet filtering it through the racial and class ideology of his colonial origins. When, in a 1949 letter to Kamla, he speaks of the photograph he has taken for Oxford's application, he seems genuinely pained to see he is "ugly," that his face is "fat": "I looked at the Asiatic on the paper and thought that an Indian from India could look no more Indian than I did" (pp. 3-4). Although adolescent in its despair, his

objectifying gaze on himself (an ugly Asiatic) reveals a complicity with the dominant convictions of the day, as well as foreshadowing what will mature into his trademark contempt for his native soil. In another letter to Kamla, in 1951, he confesses he "feels too weak to be caring about such a big responsibility – the responsibility of deserving affection" (p. 42). In a 1954 letter to Everybody, he sighs, "I feel very old, and I shall soon be looking out for the grey hairs" (p. 279). Vidia was then twenty-two. One cannot help but wonder, while reading the letters, if security, contentment, and self-confidence could have produced as brilliant a writer.

Private injuries and public indignities weave together in the lives of both Pa and Vidia. If alienation is one theme, then inequality is another. In an unusually impassioned tone, Seepersad writes to Vidia (1951) that after sixteen months the *Trinidad Guardian* has not given him a raise, yet it gave one to a white co-worker:

A thing that is making me bitter – I suppose that's how a Communist comes into being ... Here in the colonies the white man is supposed to be a superior species – eating better food, living in better houses. I don't mind telling you I have somehow come to detest most of them. (p. 86)

Yet he is also the irate uncle, complaining to Vidia (1951) that two "ultra-modern" nieces are liberal toward "inter-marriage": "A week or so ago [niece] brought in a young black-as-coal dougla ... I could not be but cold to the fellow ... [niece] insisted he was all right, a pure Indian of Madrasi parentage" (pp. 122-23). And he is concerned, too, about the possibility of Vidia marrying "a white girl," and about Kamla's intended, who is from India but Roman Catholic. Eventually he is resigned to the possibility, though he urges Vidia to "talk the matter over ... again and again" with Pat Hale (the first Mrs. V.S. Naipaul) about how Trinidad has negative reactions to mixed marriages, the majority of which are doomed to fail (pp. 145, 197, 204). These comments, and others, reveal a hardly fulfilled man, insignificant in a still-white world, who seeks equity and redemption both through art and through exclusion.

In a rare reference to bigotry, Vidia writes to Ma (1954), "Do not imagine that I am enjoying staying in [England]. This country is hot with racial prejudices" (p. 277). To Kamla in 1951 he wrote:

I find it difficult to make friends. As this term goes on, certain people are becoming more than friendly, they are positive bores. There is especially one Catholic who [presents himself as a] ... fashionable modern ... intellectual ... But, goodness! He is as superstitious as any country Indian in Trinidad, believes in black magic, and that persons can be made ill by other people ... And yet he had the absurdity to suggest that superstition was probably found in a cruder state in the West Indies! (pp. 57-58)

Here Vidia is confronted by a British middle-class parochialism that still has the power to speak for the colonies, and in a condescending way. However, Vidia's own sense of inferiority as well as the distance he cultivates between himself and his familiars – in class as well as racial terms (superstitious country Indian) – encourage him to despise all equally, in a complex mixture of dismissal of others (at times perceptive) and loathing of self.

In the end, this correspondence does not burnish Naipaul's reputation (see, for example, Theroux 1998). Yet we have come to see, or at least be better able to guess, some of what underlies his acidity. And we have the pleasure of responding to Langston Hughes's question about what happens to a dream deferred, that there is the passing of that dream to one's children. For all of Seepersad's Sisiphsian frustrations, in the end he is vindicated. He surely would have been pleased to know Vidia's words to his mother, in 1953, after his father's death: "In a way I had always looked upon my life as a continuation of his – a continuation which, I hoped, would also be a fulfillment" (p. 269).

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Diasporic Encounters: Remapping the Caribbean. MARIE-HÉLÈNE LAFOREST. Naples: Liguori, 2000. 271 pp. (Paper L 30,000, € 15.49)

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It is unlikely that when the authors of *The Empire Writes Back* argued strongly for the anti-essentialist ideal of cultural hybridity, they envisaged the triumphalist poetics of creolization and hybridity that now is sweeping postcolonial literary criticism. Today all roads lead with an inexorable inevitability to the glorification of hybrid narratives and displaced identities. Marie-Hélène Laforest's *Diasporic Encounters: Remapping the Caribbean* is symptomatic of the malaise that is currently afflicting Caribbean writing. Hybridity and creolization, we are told with numbing frequency, constitute the "founding

moment" of Caribbean literature. An unrelenting monotone is inescapable in assertions such as "Since the beginning of our history, we, Caribbeans, have been in movement" (p. 23), "The Caribbean is creole, born out of a mixture" (p. 37), "Thanks to its particular history, the Caribbean produced a world whose prevalent feature is that of being in a state of continuous transformation" (p. 53). Diasporic triumphalism has led to a critical never-never land which risks turning the once liberating concepts of hybridity and cross-culturality into an essentialism that would end all other essentialisms.

Laforest does not heed the advice of those like Antonio Benítez-Rojo and Édouard Glissant who warn against turning the notion of cultural hybridization into a new hierarchy, which opposes pure creolization to impure creolization, advanced hybridity as against retarded hybridity. She is defiantly interested in founding moments, cultural rootedness and a Carib-centric ideal. Postcolonial theory, at the very least, problematizes ideas of place, home, and rootedness. What was once seen as painful *déracinement* or cultural erosion in anti-colonial discourse does acquire a more positive connotation of nomadism and errancy from a postcolonial perspective. More importantly, the deconstructive thrust of postcolonial theory attempts to go even further and to problematize terms such as metissage and creolization. We find postcolonial theory at its most creative in concepts such as Glissant's archipelagic model which is both closed and open, concentrating and diffracting. Laforest flattens the deconstructive appeal of theories of creolization and invests heavily in ideas such as a folk-based authenticity and grounded, exclusionary identities.

As much as anything else, *Diasporic Encounters* is a personal tale of displacement and transplantation. Laforest spares us no detail about her uprooting from Haiti because of Duvalierism, her exile in the United States and ultimately her relocation to Italy where she lives the life of "a tropical flower, a beauty from the South Seas, the mere sight of me feeding the sexual fantasies [Italians] had learned to associate with the likes of me from an early age" (p. 20). Therefore, this "Caribbean Remapping" is therapeutic. It is about reestablishing connections with her native land and the folk as well as invoking like-minded literary company in the form of the Afro-Caribbean sorority of Michelle Cliff, Jamaica Kincaid, and Edwidge Danticat. They are all portrayed as unhappy hybrids who are defined more or less by their Caribbeanness. It appears that these unhappy literary hybrids are not each unhappy in her own creative way but seem to resemble each other also to the point of interchangeability. This is no mean critical achievement as Laforest is attempting to homogenize the talents of Cliff, Kincaid, and Danticat.

For instance, Michelle Cliff's hybrid identity would seem threatened by her insistence on ideals like wholeness, return, and rootedness. But the nativist implications of Cliff's longing for a "wholeness" that means "becoming one with Jamaica" (p. 197) do not bother Laforest. The fact that Kincaid is openly skeptical of being called a diasporic writer and, mercifully, does not invoke the

storytelling grandmother and folk orality as the sources of her creativity, does not disturb Laforest's Carib-centric sorority. We are blandly told that "Kincaid is a reminder that the black world is not homogeneous and consists of different positionalities" (p. 222). Because of her Haitian origins, we would expect Laforest to be on familiar ground with Edwidge Danticat. However, not only is the critical comment on Danticat's novels weak but Laforest does not seem to know her Haitian writers very well. It seems as ill-advised to turn Danticat into a purveyor of ancient Haitian folk wisdom as it is to see her work as a continuation of the tradition of the peasant novel. In any case, her knowledge of Roumain's major work is lamentable as we are told that *Masters of the Dew* ends when "a woman, who is considered a witch, is killed by a mob and her daughter beheaded" (p. 233n). She also seems to think that Danticat has established a "different etymology" for the Creole word *caco* by saying it refers to a bird.

Laforest's work has all the trappings of an academic study that should not be put aside lightly. She quotes from an impressive range of literary theorists, from Bhabha to Brathwaite, and ends her study with a sixteen-page bibliography. She, however, does not engage knowledgeably with these various currents of Caribbean thought. She often prefers evasive comments such as "Afrocentrism has been deemed essentialist by many critics" (p. 42) or passes the buck critically by confiding that "Critics agree that Césaire's view (of *négritude*) was more dialectical, conscious as he was of the plurality of Caribbean societies" (p. 96). Ultimately Laforest wants to eat her nativist yet hybrid cake and have it. A less subjective and more bracingly skeptical approach could have made a vast improvement to this book. Unfortunately, we are left feeling that, to cite her own words, "The many stories of Caribbean ethnicities and re-diasporization have yet to be written."

Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean. RENÉE LARRIER. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000. ix + 156 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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Beginning with Mariama Bâ's exclamation, "and yet what things they have to tell and to write!" (p. 1), *Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the*

Caribbean questions the silencing of women as storytellers and as writers in both oral and written Francophone African and Caribbean literature. Despite the current plethora of African, Caribbean, and African-American women writers, Larrier argues, in a number of Caribbean and African texts, the profession is constructed as uniquely male. In response, she claims that "Francophone African and Caribbean women writers reclaim sites of inscription for women in societies where they often pass unacknowledged as storytellers" (p. 6). Mae Gwendolyn Henderson's observation that "it is not that black women, in the past, have had nothing to say, but rather they have had no say" (p. 45), is the guiding principle of the study, as Larrier examines the ways in which women writers "challenge constructions of women and their experiences found in orature, literature, and popular culture" (p. 2). In positing her theory of "double *auteurité*," or "twofold authorship," Larrier argues that the women writers and storytellers in her study "reappropriate their orality ... in order to transmit knowledge" (p. 2) by creating first-person female narrators who relate their own stories. She maintains that "inscribing female voices which signifies the authors' own orality as well as their characters is an effective way of articulating women's perspectives on issues that concern them" (p. 1). In other words, women's "authority" is extended from family and social circles to include its inscription in women's writing.

Following a fascinating review of the inscription of women's voices through graphic traces on cloth, pot lids, wall paintings, and the body in Chapter 1 (inspired by Falk-Nzuji 1992), Larrier reviews stereotypical images of women in the media in Chapter 2 to show that if women's voices have always been present, they are not always heard. Her third chapter pairs the oral initiation tale "Nguessi Ngonda" from Bassa women in Cameroon with a study of Guadeloupean Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* and concludes that they both empower by portraying women who triumph over adversity. Chapter 4 compares inscriptions of friendship in Senegalese Mariama Bâ's *Une si longue lettre* and Martinican Michèle Mailliet's *L'étoile noire*; Chapter 5 examines Cameroonian Calixthe Beyala's *C'est le soleil qui m'a brûlée* and Haitian Marie Vieux Chauvet's *Amour, colère et folie* and the ways in which these texts reverse voicelessness; Chapter 6 studies autobiography and "orality" in Malian Aoua Kéita's *La vie d'Aoua Kéita racontée par elle-même* and Guadeloupean Dany Bébel-Gisler's *Léonora: L'Histoire enfouie de la Guadeloupe*. Larrier ends her study by concluding that the inscription of women's voices, whether it be on objects, on the body, or on paper, subverts erasure, silencing and stereotyping even as it articulates women's perspectives and empowers their communities.

While Larrier's study certainly proves her conclusion, this reviewer remains unconvinced that Francophone African and Caribbean women writers' "coming to voice" is indeed the same thing as inscribing "orality" in each case. This is not because it is not possible – although Eileen Julien (1992)

speculates that gender has led women away from traditionally male dominated forms such as the epic – but given the volumes dedicated to determining the exact nature of “orality” and its relation to writing, Larrier’s implied definition of the term as “voice” seems reductive in the face of such a complicated question. Equally questionable are the justifications for some of Larrier’s paired readings. Even as she claims not to deny “the specificity of national cultures and literatures” (p. 3), some comparisons seem forced, as in the claim that Bâ’s character Ramatoulaye, confined during the Muslim widow’s mourning period, and Maillet’s character Sidonie, arrested and jailed with her Jewish employers, are both confined for religious reasons. While Larrier admits that “the justification for and circumstances of the confinement are certainly not comparable” (p. 70), she pairs the works on the grounds that both protagonists keep diaries where they enter into dialogue with a narratee. Nevertheless, this justification doesn’t really lead to a better understanding of how the two works or writers relate to each other cross-culturally.

If some of the comparisons remain unconvincing, the readings themselves truly contribute to a better understanding of the writers in Larrier’s corpus. *Francophone Women Writers of Africa and the Caribbean* provides a wealth of information, and is original in its approach to the works in question. In proposing a female equivalent to Chamoiseau and Confiant’s “oralitairain,” a word they coined to capture the essence of the (male) storyteller’s vocation, Larrier’s “oralitairaine” contributes to a growing recognition of “women’s rightful place as tellers of tales” (p. 18). (See also Hale 1998.) All told, Larrier’s study represents an excellent resource for scholars, students, and teachers in the field and beyond.

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Awakening Spaces: French Caribbean Popular Songs, Music, and Culture.
BRENDA F. BERRIAN. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. xvi + 287
pp. (Cloth US\$ 40.00, Paper US\$ 16.00)

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Awakening Spaces offers both literary and ethnomusicological perspectives on contemporary French Antillean music, primarily zouk. From the late 1970s through the 1990s, zouk has been an international force not only in its home islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, but also in the neighboring Creole-speaking islands, much of Europe, and Francophone Africa. The only previous major study of zouk is by Guilbault (1993).

Berrian has visited Martinique and Guadeloupe several times and interviewed many of the island's best known musicians and producers. *Awakening Spaces* features careful translations of lyrics along with probing and quite specific discussions of those lyrics with their composers and performers, which yield crucial insights into their thoughts on political, historical, and gender issues. For readers used to the ethnographic approach of most ethnomusicology, these translations/interpretations, grounded in insiders' perspectives, may be the most rewarding aspect of the book. As a researcher who has enjoyed many of these songs, aware of their cultural resonance but often without access to their deeper meanings, I am intensely grateful for Berrian's hard work.

Berrian becomes more vague when it comes to larger perspectives. Her descriptions of French Antillean society and history seem sketchy. While her writing is warmly personal and her enthusiasm shines through, she occasionally falls into lit-crit jargon or fails to explain a theoretical point. For example, her central trope of "awakening spaces" remains unexamined until the Epilogue, and even then the discussion is cursory.

I believe that Berrian intends her trope to evoke the peculiarly ambivalent tone of French Antillean life. The islands are caught in a neocolonial Twilight Zone, superficially affluent yet heavily dependent on mainland France. The tension between French and local identity is everywhere in French Antillean cultural production. It rarely breaks out into overt resistance, yet everywhere there are subtle challenges, "slight transformations" (p. 144). These constitute Berrian's "spaces."

Each chapter treats one such "space." Chapter 1 concerns the "safespace" of the band Malavoi, which plays updated versions of older styles such as biguine and mazurka. Berrian interprets Malavoi's frequent lyrics of childhood and emigration as safe, non-political meditations on local identity. Berrian also investigates how Malavoi negotiates both local and continental tastes. She returns to this theme in Chapter 2, a discussion of Kassav', the major zouk group. Her focus, however, is on Kassav's use of Creole to assert local identity.

Chapter 3 is, for me, the book's strongest. Berrian takes up an idea introduced by Guilbault: that many zouk lyrics address gender issues in a pro-woman manner. Gender politics in the Antilles are not what North American readers would label feminist, being far more conservative. Yet some nascent sense that women deserve better exists, and Berrian captures the cautious way in which zouk expresses it: e.g., "only the well-tuned listener will grasp that 'San mandé' ['Without asking'] recounts the story of a rape" (p. 86).

Chapter 4, another strong one, describes the work of four unusually *angagé* (politically engaged) and forthright singers, the most important being the Martinican Eugène Mona. A charismatic, much-beloved singer/composer/flautist who died young in 1991, Mona's lyrics are densely allusive and personal, their meanings by no means clear even to Martinicans. Berrian's translation of several songs and interviews with some of Mona's close associates are invaluable.

Chapter 5, on performance practice, offers further detail on the presentation (and exploitation) of female singers, and further insights into Kassav's negotiation of local and international audiences. Chapter 6 outlines the work of several musicians who play what Antilleans classify as "jazz:" instrumental, contemporary versions of popular styles. Berrian interprets this tendency as "recontextualization," i.e. the assembling of a present from fragments of the past, a quintessentially creole (and Caribbean) enterprise.

Chapter 7, "A Deferential Space for the Drum," offers the thesis that drumming, previously denigrated in the French Antilles, has recently resurged both in neo-traditional forms and in popular music. I find this simplistic. In Martinique (though things may differ in Guadeloupe) there is on the one hand little "deference to the drum" by the general public or the media, other than lip-service, while on the other hand a core of dedicated cultural workers indeed promotes traditional music and dance. The situation remains ambivalent rather than respectful.

Berrian's details on Martinican traditional music include many factual errors. *Tibwa* are wooden sticks used to play supporting rhythms, not "bamboo sticks" used "for melody" (pp. 207, 212); Ti Emile Casérus was a singer, not a drummer (pp. 120, 197); the list of *bèlè* dances is erroneous and incomplete (p. 212); the description of choreography may be accurate for *gwoka* but is not for *bèlè* (p. 214); and so on. Some inaccuracies reflect local myths: for

example, the idea that *bèlè* stems from Benin (pp. 212, 228) is an unsupported legend perpetrated by local writers. To be fair, Berrian's inaccuracies are not surprising considering the lack of esteem and knowledge still surrounding *bèlè* in Martinique. Her details on *gwoka* (which I cannot corroborate from first-hand knowledge) are more likely to be accurate.

The lyrics, and their ethnographically informed interpretation, remain the heart of this book. They deserve the loving attention Berrian gives them.

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Tito Puente and the Making of Latin Music. STEVEN LOZA. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999. xvi + 258 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95, Paper US\$ 26.95)

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Tito Puente passed away on May 30, 2000, as this review was being written. Steven Loza's book makes a fitting tribute to the man and his legacy. Loza presents Puente not only as a musical genius (performer, arranger, and composer) on a par with Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Mozart, Beethoven, *et al.*, but also as the ultimate cultural worker, doing more for race relations in the United States, and able to mobilize more interracial goodwill than an army of legislators and social scientists (Loza citing Salazar, pp. 8, 68-69, 223-24).

Through a collection of first-hand reports, Loza evokes the heady days of the Palladium ballroom in Manhattan where Puente reigned over the Mambo Craze in the 1950s, earning the title "*el rey de los timbales*." There were other titles as well – King of Mambo (rivaling and eventually overtaking Pérez Prado), King of Salsa (with Celia Cruz as his anointed Queen), King of Latin Music (where Africa is the acknowledged Motherland). With a magical wave of his drumstick, Puente turned the Palladium into St. Augustine's "City of

God" (pp. 236-37), a global village where people from all walks of life came together, against all odds and against the grain of historical segregation, and danced the night away in harmony: "The Palladium was ... the catalyst that brought Afro-Americans, Irish, Italians, Jews [together] ... What social scientists couldn't do on purpose, the mambo was able to accomplish by error" (p. 68), doing "more for race relations than any other kind of legislation or amendments to the Constitution" (p. 69).

Among those who were drawn to Puente's music and inspired by the Palladium scene was the young Robert Farris Thompson who went on to become one of the leading scholars of African influences in American culture and an early Euro-American proponent of African-American studies at Yale University. Joyce Wadler's obituary of Puente in the *New York Times* quotes Thompson: "There were guys my age who were envious they weren't at the Moulin Rouge in the days of Toulouse-Lautrec; who weren't at Minton's in the days of the birth of bop. I was secure in the knowledge that I had been there on the birth of New York Mambo."

Loza aims at describing what enabled Puente to bring such people together and has compiled a treasure trove of kitchen table stories about Puente and the making of Latin music in the United States. More than half the book consists of interviews with fellow participant-observers in the mambo phenomenon (Max Salazar, Joe Conzo, Ray Santos, Chico Sesma, Jerry González, Poncho Sanchez, and Hilton Ruiz), including the maestro himself. Later on, Loza analyzes Puente's music and his role in the development of Latin jazz.

All in all, the book is more hagiography than musical ethnography; therein lies both its strength and its weakness as a work of scholarship. Most key insights come from interviews rather than Loza's own cultural analysis (in Chapter 7, "Identity, Nationalism, and the Aesthetics of Latin Music"); this is more a tribute to his interview skills and knowledge of key players than a criticism of his lack of "original" ideas on the broader relevance of Puente's life. Nevertheless, while the social context of Puente's work is discussed in the interviews, Loza's own analysis breaks little ground.

For instance, Loza takes Peter Manuel (1995) to task for his factually impoverished analysis of the Cubanization of Puerto Rican music, countering with a long discussion of how all Caribbean music is multicultural (as if Manuel would deny this), but he fails to acknowledge the core issue: how is it possible that almost every Puerto Rican musician of the twentieth century (with at least one major exception: Don Rafael Cepeda) has been able to make a living at virtually every kind of music under the sun (European classical, Spanish flamenco, Dominican merengue, Cuban rumba, American rock, etc.) except Puerto Rican music?! Puente was more celebrated for his scintillating mastery of Cuban genres such as cha-cha and guaguancó (showered with Grammy Awards and honorary doctorates) than for any of his brief excursions into Puerto Rican genres such as bomba and plena that are arguably

just as rich (and had been popularized through Rafael Cortijo's arrangements). This is not simply a case of trying to put Puerto Ricans in yet another little ethnic box, as Loza seems to think Manuel is trying to do: "why should people of Puerto Rican heritage be expected to restrict themselves to 'island' culture and identity?" (p. 221). What ethnomusicologist José Emmanuel Dufrasne (1994) has called the rampant "xenophilia" and "Afrophobia" of Puerto Rican culture certainly has something to do with the on-going legacies of slavery and colonialism, and is thus not simply a matter of Cuban and Puerto Rican cultures being so intimately intertwined that their differences (historically, culturally, politically) no longer matter. In his critique of Manuel, Loza has completely neglected the question of the marginalization of Puerto Rican music (especially the coastal genres of bomba and plena), leaving the reader to wonder whether he considers these genres self-evidently inferior (as plenty of Puerto Rican musicians have unfortunately and erroneously conceded) or that their distinctive qualities are irrelevant, on the grounds that it's all "Latin," i.e. neo-African, anyway; for further discussion of this point, see Barton 1995.

Since Loza's book is more of a paean to Puente than an ethnography, it's understandable that it focuses more on the breathtaking creativity taking place at the Palladium than the heartbreaking losses and injustices that accompanied Puente's journey to New York. As a toast to Tito Puente's wizardry (with some tantalizing bits of musical ethnography that remain to be explored), it is ideal for those who are already Latin music *aficionados* and those interested in the birth of Latin jazz, not to mention those who might be inspired by the life of a fabulously gifted *nuyorican* who proudly represented his island home on all his journeys.

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The Making of Belize: Globalization in the Margins. ANNE SUTHERLAND. Westport CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1998. x + 203 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95, Paper US\$ 19.95)

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In *The Making of Belize*, Anne Sutherland, an anthropologist who has resided intermittently in Belize since 1971, describes and theorizes globalization in this former British colony. The forces of cultural change identified here are many, including the electronic media, immigration, tourism, the U.S.-bound drug trade, and environmentalism. After a brief theoretical introduction, Sutherland examines the country's colonial past and her prior fieldwork on the small island of Caye Caulker. A second section consists of brief chapters on ethnicity, tourism, and Rastafarians. A third section addresses international environmentalism, the drug trade, current economic issues, and communication networks. The book concludes with a cursory (three-page) discussion that restates arguments raised in previous sections.

Sutherland provides a colorful account of the changes wrought by e-mail and satellite television on Caye Caulker, whose links to the outside world had formerly consisted of surface mail and a single telephone line. As an effort to theorize these changes, however, her book does not greatly enhance extant scholarship on Belize or globalization generally. Her thesis is that, as a result of globalization, "Belize skipped modernism and went straight to postmodernism, meaning that it never developed an industrial/ manufacturing-based economy before moving rapidly into the information/ technology age" (p. 91). Sutherland's theoretical overview refers to the work of several globalization theorists, but it is apparent that her thesis is situated in the "stages of growth" assumptions that informed modernization theory in the 1960s. Globalization theorists generally do not presume a linear movement of societies from colonialism to modernity to postmodernity. Why, then, should anyone regard the claim that "Belize surprised everyone and went straight into postmodernism" (p. 3) as a surprising observation, much less a theoretically significant one? Nor, despite her persistent reassertion of this claim throughout the book, does she attempt to show how Belize's precocious transition from colonialism to postmodernity differs from the experience of other Caribbean countries.

One is tempted to attribute some of the book's analytical poverty to the theory that informs it. Since 1989, there has been much celebration of an ostensibly unified global system on the part of neoliberal economists, and corresponding flights of fancy among anthropologists who delight in ironic juxtapositions of cultural forms. As Miyoshi (1993) observed in a trenchant dissent from theoretical fashion, much of what is "new" about the global system is only superficially so. Recent movements of labor and capital have reinforced global disparities existing since the dawn of colonialism. The affluent North and underdeveloped South remain farther apart than ever in every measure of the quality of life of their residents, whether per capita income, life expectancy, or infant mortality. Belize is no exception to this pattern, despite the introduction of internationalized consumption and aesthetic standards via satellite television. Indeed, the arrival of television in 1982 only whetted the country's longstanding appetite for foreign goods, further aggravating its foreign debt and vulnerability to external economic forces.

Unfortunately, when political economic forces are not wholly absent from Sutherland's work, they are misrepresented. For example, she characterizes Belize's economic policy as one of import substitution in the same sentence in which she discusses the country's citrus, banana, and sugar industries, all of which are overwhelmingly geared to foreign markets (p. 157). The country's economic policy actively promotes export production of goods and services utilizing low-wage (increasingly immigrant) labor, a strategy that has been repeatedly reaffirmed by both national political parties. Had this policy been the departure point for her analysis, Sutherland might have unified the disparate themes of her book around a single analytical frame. It could be argued, for example, that growth of the tourist and drug industries was abetted by the expulsion of Afro-Belizean labor from agriculture, made possible in turn by the government's cheap labor and immigration policies. Tourism has also encouraged development of a commodified national identity centering on the country's natural environment and cultural diversity. While this manufactured identity bears little relationship to the lives of most Belizeans, it is a central mechanism by which the government and tourist industry "niche market" Belize to ecologically conscious travelers. In the absence of a unified theory, Sutherland calls upon the "landscapes" of globalization mentioned in Appadurai's work to account for contemporary culture change. The effect, however, is that globalization appears to be the result of a number of unrelated coincidences.

Beneath the technological façade of the internet and television, Belize's economic and political relationships with the North remain persistently neo-colonial. And yet, the impact of the foreign media, aesthetics, and consumption practices on the "structure of feeling" in Belizean daily life is undeniable. In this respect, the book will resonate with anyone who has repeatedly visited the country over the last two decades. One original contribution of the volume

lies in its critical discussion of foreign environmental groups, which have persuaded the government to reserve 40 percent of the country's land area for conservation areas. Unfortunately, Sutherland does not fully explicate the motives of environmentalists or the government's complicity with them in uprooting Belizeans who formerly hunted and farmed in now-protected zones. Despite an inadequate conceptual framework and many inaccuracies (the country's second largest town, Dangriga, is misspelled throughout), *The Making of Belize* does partly redeem itself as a lively descriptive account. It might serve as an engaging introduction to contemporary Belize for lower division undergraduates, but only if accompanied by classroom caveats regarding its theoretical and factual lapses.

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"Any Time Is Trinidad Time": Social Meanings and Temporal Consciousness. KEVIN K. BIRTH. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999. xiv + 190 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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Though its title indicates a conceptual focus on "time" as a social and cultural phenomenon, this monograph is focused at least as much on a setting, namely the "rural" Trinidadian village of "Anamat" – a pseudonym Birth takes from Morris Freilich, an ethnographer who had worked in the same physical locale (it can hardly be quite the same village) some thirty years earlier. The text provides little motivation for linking this locale with a study of "time." Rather, one has the sense that Birth came to the locale and the conceptual focus separately and never fully worked out their relationship. As a reader interested in life in Anamat, I found myself wishing the book said more about other topics, as would have been the case in village ethnographies of an earlier era; as a reader interested in cultural constructions of "time," I found

myself wishing the book attended more to the circulation of persons and ideas through and beyond Anamat, as would be the case in an ethnographic work shaped more by theoretical developments in cultural-social anthropology over the last two decades. Neither fish nor fowl then, this book ends up being banal on both counts.

A fair indication of the thinness of Birth's analysis is given by the reading he offers of a vernacular term for a group of under- and unemployed young adult men who hang out, or "lime," in Anamat. People in Anamat refer to these men collectively as the "boys on the block," a datum about which Birth has this to say: "Ideologically, by using this metaphor the villagers define those on the block as 'boys' and not 'men'" (p. 83). What is offered as interpretation here is, in effect, the reduction of metaphor to literal meaning. By contrast, one might imagine that the term "boy" is deployed at least in part to characterize the camaraderie among the men rather than their social age; and if one were indeed interested in whether the term defined these men "as boys," one might look for resistance to this term on their part, or, at the very least, one might seek to examine how the linguistic use of the term relates to affirmations of manhood and/or adult status among these men. But Birth avoids such departures, staying as close to the surface as possible.

In regard to "time," Birth's general approach is to proliferate distinct types of "time" by identifying seemingly every and any activity with its own model of "time" (p. 9 *et passim*). There is, in short, no well worked out distinction in the text between, on the one hand, different activities occurring in a common framework of time and, on the other, different constructions of time. Such an approach risks trivializing the very notion of the cultural construction of time, since it has the effect of allowing all variation at the level of social activity to be construed as variation at the level of culture – as if culture were more or less a literal copy of social experience. As one would expect, the culture that results has all of the friction of social life built into it as ideational conflicts – a vision that suggests that the coordination of tasks and lives in Anamat requires, before all else, reconciling distinct cultural models of time. For example, in a discussion of the lives of Anamat's taxi drivers, Birth initially abstracts a distinct "taxi time" that *reflects* (note the moment of literalism here) the ebbs and flows of customer demand and traffic. Birth then identifies a conflict between this flexible "time" and the clock-like predictability of Anamat school children hiring taxis at the same time every morning to travel to their schools. Having staged this problem, he then proceeds to reveal its solution in the particular ways Anamat's taxi drivers accommodated the students' "school time." What is left unclear, however, is why such accommodations are excluded from the initial model of "taxi time," given that transporting children to schools was an ordinary component of taxi work. In short, that different customers make different demands on taxi drivers seems real enough, but Birth does not make a compelling case for thinking about this as

a conflict between two constructions of time, one characteristic of Anamat's taxi drivers and the other alien to them.

The flip-side of Birth's hyper-perception of conflict and complexity at the cultural level is a recurring deployment of old-fashioned functionalism, with all its attendant failings. To give one example, he tells us that the "persistence" of racial stereotypes in Trinidad "is attributable to the ongoing *usefulness* of the stereotypes" – though this "usefulness," when elaborated, turns out to be the contribution of the stereotypes to "power relations" (p. 19, emphasis added). Here we see the characteristic tendency of functionalist analysis to conflate interested uses of something (in this case, uses of racial stereotypes by the socially powerful) with both utility and cause. In another passage, "festive time" is characterized as "effective." Why? "Because of the irreverence toward ... time found in festive contexts" (p. 120) – a view which would seem to allow any and all consequences to be recast as functions. Similarly, Birth argues that "the human tendency toward sloppy choreographing" of social interactions "serves in the maintenance of social organization," since "breakdowns in ... temporal coordination ... provide possibilities for emphasizing the importance of social relationships" (p. 22). Social mishaps, in other words, serve the function of allowing people to demonstrate that they care about social mishaps.

In the end, the book's primary value lies outside of cultural analysis. Along the way, it offers succinct and informative accounts of the conditions of crop production in rural Trinidad, notably of cocoa and coffee – and particularly the challenges of producing these crops for international markets. It is unfortunate that Birth is not equally informative about the featured topics of this book.

Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians, and the Struggle for Hispaniola.
MICHELE WUCKER. New York: Hill and Wang, 1999. xxi + 281 pp. (Cloth US\$ 27.50)

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Wucker takes on the weighty issues of Dominican-Haitian relations from the vantage point of a North American journalist and traveler. She begins her journey with vivid descriptions of cockfight rings on both sides of the island of Hispaniola and the men – poor and rich – who frequent them. Subsequent

chapters take us to the Dominican frontier region, Santo Domingo's Little Haiti, a Dominican sugar company compound, to Port-au-Prince during the Cédras regime and after Aristide's return to power, and even on a side-trip to the Dominican emigrant colony in New York City. Loosely structured ("rambling," some might say), the book tacks back and forth between historical background, present-day anecdote, description, and dialogue, and opinionated discussion of themes common to both sides of the island, such as the use of the fighting cock as a political symbol and the historical role of political strongmen. The cockfight is Wucker's metaphor for Dominican-Haitian relations: two nations locked in a mindless and irrevocable combat for supremacy.

At their best, books of this genre can cast doubt on received academic wisdom, by raising observations that fail to fit any prevailing models. Even leaving aside its many historical and ethnographic inaccuracies, *Why the Cocks Fight* is not such a book. Wucker unquestioningly accepts two of the most questionable, if most widely and uncritically propagated, ideas about relations between the two countries, namely, that the citizens of Haiti and the Dominican Republic are consumed with animosity toward the other country's people, and that the two nations are engaged in some sort of struggle for control over the island. Together, these two assertions constitute a "conflict model" of Dominican-Haitian relations, a model based on a biased, anti-Haitian reading of history, propagated with official backing in the Dominican Republic since the Trujillo dictatorship of 1930 to 1961. Of course, fundamental conflicts stand between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. On the Dominican side, for example, racist expressions of hostility toward Haitians abound. But the conflict model can only be sustained by ignoring a mountain of contradictory evidence, which suggests that the people of the two nations are bound together in a complex and subtle weave of mutual fascination and repulsion, attraction and dislike, respect and fear. Take as an example the 1996 presidential campaign of the late José Francisco Peña Gómez (pp. 185-95). During this campaign, Peña was the target of openly racist slurs and innuendoes of hidden disloyalty to the Dominican Republic, because of his known Haitian ancestry. It has been conjectured that this smear campaign swung enough votes against him to cost him the election. What has never been pondered is how Peña came within a hair's breadth of winning the presidency in the election's first round, in spite of the virulent hate campaign waged against him. Who are these nearly 50 percent of Dominicans who were so unperturbed by Peña's presumed Haitian ancestry that they voted to place the country's leadership in his hands? Wucker never stops to ask the obvious question, Does anti-Haitianism really have as powerful a hold on the Dominican imagination as so many (Dominican elite) observers seem to think? We are not given a clue about how deeply or widely anti-Haitian feeling runs among ordinary Dominicans, and her smoothing out of the many lights and shadows of popular opinion behind the 1996 General Election into

a monotonous anti-Haitianism is unfortunately characteristic of the greater part of her book.

Worse, Wucker's picture of the past and present state of Dominican-Haitian relations is so dark that it offers little reason for optimism about the future. There is almost no mention of people who are struggling for better communication or improved relations between the two countries. And they *do* exist! Among North American readers, the book is therefore all too likely to support patronizing opinions that these countries really do need our help in learning how to be democracies.

An even more serious distortion is the idea that the fundamental dynamic of Dominican-Haitian relations is two nations struggling for control over the island of Hispaniola. Reading against the grain of Wucker's interpretation, the events and situations described in *Why the Cocks Fight* do not add up to the "struggle for Hispaniola" conjured by the book's subtitle. Put simply, Haiti and Haitians are *not* contesting the Dominicans for control over their part of the island. By my observation, Haitians do not regard Dominicans with anything like the same attention or feeling as that of Dominicans looking upon Haitians. Whereas Haiti appears to be a Dominican obsession, the very existence of the Dominican Republic only periodically seems to surface to the consciousness of most Haitians. (As if in tacit recognition of this asymmetry, only 10 of the 99 pages of first-hand description and life stories in Wucker's book are set in Haiti; the rest are set in the Dominican Republic or among Dominicans in New York City.) In all these ways, Wucker offers a highly one-sided account, reflecting a Dominican, not a Haitian, perspective on Haitian-Dominican relations.

Our Lady of Class Struggle: The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Haiti. TERRY REY. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1999. x + 362 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.95)

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This wide-ranging book is one of the few studies of popular Haitian Catholicism available in English. Weaving together historical, sociological, theological, and ethnographic evidence, Terry Rey argues that devotion to the Virgin Mary is an important but overlooked aspect of Haitian religious life

and a window into the main ideological struggles in this starkly class-divided society. Rey's strong authorial voice makes this an engaging book to read (despite the numerous typographical errors and misspellings). In particular, specialists in Latin American church-state relationships, Caribbean religions, and Haitian studies will find his thesis a useful intervention into debates about religious devotion and class interests.

Rey locates the Virgin Mary at the center of legitimation struggles between elite and subaltern groups from colonial St. Domingue up to the re-installation of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1994. He shows how the symbolism of Mary as well as specific worship activities (pilgrimages, prayer groups, displays of personal piety, etc.) have helped dominant groups to extend their hegemony and subordinate groups to mobilize resistance. The neo-Marxist analysis is a refreshing change from the usual focus in studies of Haitian religion on continuities with African forms and the syncretism and symbiosis between Catholicism and Vodun. Rey argues for the mosaic model of Haitian religious pluralism; he asserts that most Haitians make only a superficial identification between Mary and Ezili, her iconic Vodun counterpart. The two deities operate in distinctive belief systems and embody different spiritual principles, and Rey devotes only a single short chapter to the topic. He is far more interested in the ideological uses of Haitian religions than the symbolic and theological relations between them.

For Rey, religious representations are the vehicle and product of class interest, and only secondarily of historical memory or cultural creativity. His theoretical framework derives from Marx and Weber, although his more immediate touchstones are Antonio Gramsci and Pierre Bourdieu. From Gramsci comes the notion that people use the idiom of popular religion to challenge unjust social arrangements, even those legitimated by the orthodox religious establishment. Adopting the religion of the dominant class clearly does not mean endorsing its rule, as Rey illustrates with numerous examples of Marian devotion among disfavored groups in Haiti. These range from the black military leader Romaine-la-Prophétesse who, inspired by the Virgin, led freed slaves in battle against white planters in 1792 up to the contested uses of Marian imagery by both Aristide supporters and the Cédras junta from 1991 to 1994. Bourdieu supplies an economic metaphor in which agents and institutions compete for the production and control of "religious capital," including the goods of salvation. Bourdieu's economic logic leads Rey to speak of the "free market" in religion during the schism between Haiti and the Vatican from 1804 to 1860, in which Vodun's symbolic capital displaced that of Catholicism, as well as the quest for monopoly control implicit in the Anti-Superstition Campaigns led by the resurgent elite church in 1898, 1913, and 1941 (p. 59). The other notions in Rey's theoretical toolkit – symbolic violence, theodicy, and coded forms of dissent – all support his analysis of

Marian devotion as an essentially contested practice used both to legitimate and subvert the dominant order.

Rey sounds this theme throughout the entire book, and it informs his ethnographic and interview-based research. The most satisfying portion of his empirical work is a detailed case study of a poor rural woman hounded into internal exile in the Port-au-Prince slums under the Cédras regime. Her intense devotion to Mary remoralizes her and motivates her pro-Aristide political sentiments. Rey complements this portrait with survey research which again suggests the pragmatic and politicized quality of Marianism among the poor. He then provides one of the very few empirical reports of religious practices among Haiti's elite through a second case study of a businesswoman dedicated at birth to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and relying on Mary for both personal redemption and legitimation of her privilege. Although he occasionally lapses into the same contempt for the upper class which he criticizes in others, the descriptions he provides offer important insights into the religious discourse of this powerful sector of Haitian society. Whereas Rey's historical account relies entirely on published sources, the empirical work analyzed all too briefly in Chapters 6 and 7 is an original and lively contribution.

Nonetheless, the book's strong theoretical project will spark the most debate about it. In general, there are several strategies for writing about the injustice and social exclusions of Haitian society, including moral indignation, advocacy, economic and policy analysis, and historical and cultural interpretation. Most scholars combine these in different proportions, but the perfect balance is hard to achieve. Rey errs on the side of a rhetorical opposition between dominant and subordinate groups, the "lords of the world" and the oppressed, and his framework comes very close to the polemics of liberation theology and the scriptural Magnificat of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) which are espoused by the subjects of his research. He thereby comes closer to the motives and life-world of Marian devotees, but at the cost of glossing over the historical specificity in Haitian dialectics of power and resistance.

Most accounts of Haitian history, Rey's included, trace a succession of dominant groups from white French planters through the postrevolutionary land-owning *mulâtre* class, the nineteenth-century business and military elites, American occupants and their puppets, the Duvalier regimes, etc. Each of these groups used specific strategies of legitimation and organized state and ecclesiastical power in different ways. Each type of power, in turn, catalyzed particular forms of resistance and foreclosed others. However, Rey applies the meta-theory of Gramsci and Bourdieu in the same way to every historical period. As a consequence he lumps together the presidencies of Pétiion (early nineteenth-century), Lescot (1940s), and Cédras (1990s) as illustrations of the same recipe for legitimation (p. 186), and the activities of freed slaves in 1790s and members of the liberationist Ti-Legliz movement two centuries

later as examples the same sort of counter-hegemony (p. 282). A more fruitful approach would use the study of resistance to detect historical transformations in the configuration and methods of power (as the anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod and others have advocated). The goal is not to abandon the focus on power, but only the notion that "the oppressed" comprise a singular and consistent agent in Haitian history. Such an approach would explicitly take up the differences between historically distinct forms of subjection, alliance, and resistance. Rey's book, by contrast, recounts essentially the same story about the struggle to appropriate Mary, while the categorical opposition between the forces of legitimation and resistance remains the same (apart from a change of names, dates, and personages). This does nothing to explain some striking historical puzzles. Why and how did the institutional church move so quickly from complicity with the Duvalierist state to its progressive stance of the 1980s? Rey notes the problem and cites Greene's important book on the topic (1993), but does not provide his own argument (p. 67). Why have the revolutionary possibilities of popular Marianism crystallized at certain moments but not at others? The answers lie not in a mechanical balance of power between two groups, rigidified within Gramscian theory, but in specific constellations of ideology and symbolic violence which undoubtedly shift over time. These shifts should be at the center, not the periphery, of scholarly writing.

Moreover, taking seriously the historical variance in strategies of power could help prognosticate the future of Haitian Marianism, a task which Rey does not attempt here. Christian base communities, the organizational kernel of the Church's preferential option for the poor and hence a key site for liberatory Marianism, have been implanted throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, but the results have varied tremendously. In Brazil, base communities have been eclipsed by Pentecostal and neo-African groups which hold out other resources for the poor (Burdick 1993). In revolutionary Nicaragua, the popular church grew while the official hierarchy declined, and in the short run such changes created a novel form of socialist Christianity (Lancaster 1988). With a more complex historical argument, Rey's book could help place the current conjuncture in Haiti within a comparative Latin American framework and predict which religious paths the popular classes in Haiti will take in years to come. These are the debates opened up by Rey's provocative book and which recommend it to all serious students of Haiti, whether or not they agree with its theoretical commitments.

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Decision-Making in the UN Security Council: The Case of Haiti, 1990-1997. DAVID M. MALONE. Oxford: Clarendon, 1998. xxi + 322 pp. (Cloth US\$ 85.00)

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Elizabeth Gibbons and David Malone study the origins, consequences, and relative merits of the three-year sanctions regime imposed on Haiti by the international community in reaction to the military overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September 1991. Both offer insiders' accounts of the Haitian drama. From 1992 to 1996, Gibbons was the representative of UNICEF in Port-au-Prince; and from 1992 to 1994, Malone was the Canadian Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations. In addition, Malone was the senior Canadian participant at the July 1993 Governors Island negotiations which resulted in the ill-fated agreement seeking the restoration of Aristide's presidency.

While Gibbons concentrates on the economic and humanitarian impact of the sanctions on Haiti's poor, Malone focuses on the decision-making process that culminated in the UN Security Council resolution 940 of July 1994 authorizing "all necessary means" to dislodge the military dictatorship. Ultimately, resolution 940 legitimized the American-led intervention that restored Aristide to the presidency in October 1994, and that put an end to the three-year-old sanctions regime. According to Gibbons and Malone, the sanctions alone would never have succeeded in reaching their goal of restoring democracy to Haiti. As both authors maintain, the embargo was porous and largely

ineffective in forcing General Raoul Cédras and the other coup leaders to step down from power.

In fact, Gibbons argues convincingly that the sanctions had the opposite effect; they disempowered the population, destroyed an already fragile economy, and further impoverished the vast Haitian majority, while enriching the "de factos" – the popular name given to the illegal military dictatorship and its supporters. As Gibbons puts it, "The 'preponderance of evidence' points unmistakably to sanctions' disastrous impact on the Haitian economy and the welfare of ordinary, innocent citizens, even as they left their military target virtually unscathed" (p. 99). Moreover, Gibbons argues that sanctions emasculated the state and whatever democratic institutions may have existed in the country. The sanctions regime was thus a catastrophe, not only because it created severe economic hardship, but also because it devastated the already debilitated Haitian state. In Gibbons's words, upon Aristide's return, "the institutions of state had become disjointed and their capacity for governance crippled as much by the consequences of the sanctions as by the 'de factos' pillage" (p. 73).

The disastrous impact of sanctions represents the single most important theme of Gibbons's book. In her view, Haiti's experience generates the moral imperative of devising a new sanctions regime. First, Gibbons suggests that foreign assistance should continue to flow to the targeted country but exclusively to preserve the infrastructure sustaining the population's education, health, and democratic organs. Second, she advocates both severe financial sanctions aimed at freezing the foreign-held assets and credit lines of the wrongdoers, and an embargo on luxury goods and weapons. Thus, Gibbons argues for a sanctions regime that hurts perpetrators but spares victims of human violations. In the end, however, the lesson from Haiti is that sanctions and for that matter any sanctions regime, no matter how carefully conceived, will be unlikely to dislodge brutal tyrants from power, unless they are faced with an immediate and credible threat of force.

Malone reaches a similar conclusion, but seems convinced that the sanctions regime imposed on Haiti, however ineffective it might have been, was a necessary step in mustering international, and especially American support for any military intervention. As he explains, "Even though the threat of force, actively supported by the USA, would doubtless have led to the collapse of the de facto regime within forty-eight hours of its putsch, sanctions were originally the only form of coercion likely to benefit from broad international support" (p. 172).

Both authors' critical assessment of sanctions raises an important question: would a less porous sanctions regime – that is, the imposition from the very start of the crisis of a total embargo supported by the Dominican Republic and supplemented by a naval blockade and targeted sanctions against the coup leaders and their allies – have succeeded in returning Aristide to power quickly? The

Washington Protocol of 1992 as well as the Governors Island Agreement of 1993 demonstrated clearly that whenever the actual imposition or even the threat of more severe sanctions materialized, the "de factos" showed willingness to negotiate and make major concessions. However, whenever the threat was removed, the Junta reverted to an intransigent posture.

This in turn prompts another set of questions that Malone marginally alludes to, but that Gibbons virtually ignores: why did the international community and the United States in particular fail to impose immediately such a total sanctions regime on Haiti? Why did the "de factos" remain in power for three years in defiance of multiple UN and OAS condemnations? The determining but not exclusive answer lies in the vicissitudes of American foreign policy towards Haiti. It is clear that whatever may have been its role in the coup of September 1991, the American government had very little sympathy for Aristide. In fact, Aristide's prophetic messianism and left-leaning tendencies made him an enemy of Washington's "cold-warriors." In the presidential elections of December 1990, the Bush administration opposed his candidacy and supported Marc Bazin, a former World Bank executive and Minister of Finance under Jean-Claude Duvalier. The CIA and the Pentagon, along with the Haitian elite, never accepted Aristide's victory; Raoul Cédras, Biamby, and many other key figures in the coup of 1991 were, after all, on the CIA payroll.

In the "de facto" era, the CIA was involved in the creation of the violent paramilitary organization, Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH), that was supposed to constitute a political front counterbalancing the Aristide movement. It is not surprising that the support the "de factos" received from Washington convinced them that the external forces advocating the reinstatement of Aristide were prevaricated and had neither the will nor the power to impose his return. Their conviction was further strengthened when the U.S. warship *Harlan County*, sent in accordance with the Governors Island Agreement, failed to dock in Haiti in October 1993. Fearing a violent confrontation with a dozen of FRAPH's thugs, the *Harlan County*, carrying nearly 200 American troops on a noncombat mission to prepare the island for Aristide's return, pulled out of Haitian waters.

The American retreat was symptomatic of an incoherent foreign policy. It vacillated between an accommodation with the de factos at Aristide's expense on the one hand, and a determined commitment to return Aristide to the presidency. While this commitment crystallized in the massive military occupation of Haiti in October 1994, it responded more to the vagaries of U.S. domestic politics than international norms of the UN or the OAS. It is true that the "Santiago declaration" approved by the OAS in June 1991 guaranteed that the Organization would respond decisively to any undemocratic transfer of power in any member state. Haiti was thereby catapulted into the international agenda, which led to Security Council Resolution 940 – the unprece-

dented UN endorsement of military intervention to remove power holders and replace them with the regime that they had previously overthrown.

It is also true that the end of the cold war generated a short-lived liberal euphoria about what Gibbons (p. 7) calls an "emerging right to democratic governance" superseding entrenched notions of national sovereignty. In short, the international climate conspired against Haitian coup-makers and facilitated Aristide's restoration. However, had it not been for a new constellation of forces in America's domestic politics, the restoration might have never occurred. The coming together of this constellation was partly generated by the disastrous material effects of the sanctions, which accelerated the massive flow of Haitian refugees to American shores. Fleeing the brutal repression of the military, the Haitian "boat-people" became a source of constant embarrassment for the Washington administration.

By April 1994, prominent Afro-American figures attacked their government's policy towards Haitian refugees as racist and barbaric. Their anger led to both the highly publicized and successful hunger strike of Randall Robinson who demanded an overhaul of the Clinton strategy toward Haiti, and the mobilization of the Congressional Black Caucus behind Aristide's cause. With critical Congressional elections looming that November, President Clinton was, as Malone points out, "ambushed ... through channels [he] could not afford to ignore" (p. 115). Under massive pressures from his Afro-American constituency ("a bedrock component of [his] electoral coalition"), Clinton was forced to reassess his policy. He thus decided to "restore Aristide before November" (pp. 115-16). Clinton's decision precipitated events; on September 15 he gave an ultimatum to the *de factos*, telling them in an uncompromising tone that they had better step down, for a massive military invasion was imminent. At the last moment, however, a controversial mission headed by former President Jimmy Carter and including General Colin Powell and Senator Sam Nun traveled to Port-au-Prince and negotiated with the "de factos" the terms of their departure and the American-led takeover of Haiti. On September 19, Operation Uphold Democracy, as the takeover was called, began to unfold in a "permissive environment." On October 15, Aristide returned to Haiti's national palace to resume his presidency. By that time Cédras and his key allies had left the country.

Since then, René Préval has been elected president and has succeeded Aristide in a peaceful transition of power. However, a series of flawed and fraudulent legislative elections followed, contributing to a general systemic crisis and the breakup of the Lavalas political movement that carried Aristide to the presidency. Haiti's future remains uncertain if not utterly bleak. These accounts of the immediate past by Gibbons and Malone are invaluable contributions to the understanding of these current uncertainties and this sense of bleakness permeating the post-"de facto" era.

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Cuban Sugar in the Age of Mass Production: Technology and the Economics of the Sugar Central, 1899-1929. ALAN DYE. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1998. xiii + 343 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

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Recent books by César Ayala and Alan Dye on Caribbean sugar economies in the early twentieth century provide new insights into a crucial period of the region's economic development and U.S. imperialism. Unfortunately, as the two studies appeared more or less simultaneously, they are not in a direct dialogue with one another. Both examine Cuba from the beginning of the American imperial project in the region (although Ayala treats the broader Spanish Caribbean) until the collapse of sugar prices brought about by the 1930s depression. However, in spite of their geographic and temporal overlap, the books differ greatly, with a few important exceptions, in their methodology, interests, and especially interpretations of the power of U.S. imperialism on Caribbean economies and societies.

Dye's work attempts to revise interpretations, especially those of Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, concerning the importance of U.S. intervention in the development of the Cuban sugar industry. He argues that increasing capital intensive industrialization and sugar monoculture were not the result of political intervention or predatory U.S. capital. Rather, the technical and managerial advances of the second industrial revolution produced those results. The new continuous process technology (the coordination of all stages of production to increase speed and lower costs per unit) of the giant *centrales* (sugar mills), regardless of mill owners' nationalities, dictated the expansion of mills and the cane fields that supplied them in order to achieve optimum economic efficiency.

Dye begins his work by sketching the development of the sugar business in the nineteenth century (as does Ayala), and then proceeds to address various aspects of the industry. Generally, he downplays the effects of imperial power, arguing that technological changes or past historical realities accounted for the expansion of the industry, the uneven technological advancement of

North American versus Cuban mills, the dominance of eastern Cuba (the center of U.S. owned mills) over the older western areas of production, and the transfer of Cuban mills to U.S. ownership.

Dye is an economic historian and a good part of his book consists of applying to the Cuban case abstract economic theories such as the vintage-capital effect, adjustment costs, asset specificity, and the fixed-effects regression model (usually only tested on North Atlantic industries). Much of the work may therefore be of interest to economists or those concerned with technical aspects of the Cuban sugar industry. However, Dye is usually careful to explain the economic theories he employs, making his work accessible for the non-initiate in the world of economic arcana.

While Dye's statistical and economic research into the working of the sugar industry is impressive, he seems to push his thesis too far. Many of his arguments rely on the assertion that both Cubans and North Americans made rational economic decisions given the situations in which they found themselves (the Cubans hampered by older equipment and having to deal with less land area under their direct control). However, he underestimates the role of U.S. influence within the neocolonial Cuban state and the advantages metropolitan capital gave North American mills. He asserts that investors' desires "were not domination but, rather, maximization of the returns to their investments" (p. 176). Yet domination is often the manner by which maximization of profit is achieved.

For example, one key area of agreement between the two books is the importance of the continued existence of independent *colonos* (cane farmers) who owned their own land in western Cuba, which prevented complete domination of that region by large *centrales* (as was the case in the east). Independent *colonos* were not totally under the thumb of the mills, as they could not be kicked off their land. This, along with the higher concentration of mills and public railroads in the west, made it easier for them to play one mill off another and drive up the price of cane to their benefit. Dye explains that U.S. investors logically chose to build in the east to avoid the problems independent *colonos* created in the west. He acknowledges that private railroads increased the power of *centrales* at the expense of *colonos*, as private lines gave the mills monopsony power. He further mentions (mostly in a footnote) the role of the U.S. military government in limiting public access railroads in favor of private lines (pp. 206-7, 306, fn. 48). However, Dye does not stress the importance of this political domination for insuring the economic domination of large North American *centrales* by limiting public railroads and thus *colonos'* abilities to bargain with the mills.

Curiously, Dye himself, while using the fixed-effects analysis to prove that the proportion of independent *colonos* – and not cane quality or productive soil – led to North American involvement in the east, underscores the advantages North American capital enjoyed. He finds that an orientation to

North America was of "comparable magnitude" statistically to the importance of independent *colonos* for explaining regional diversity (p. 228); yet he spends all of Chapter 6 discussing the *colonos* and only mentions the effects of North American orientation in passing.

César Ayala's principal concern is tracing the effects of U.S. colonialism on the expansion of the sugar industry in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. His regional study – including the U.S. mainland – allows the industry as a whole to come under scrutiny and explores how local conditions in the islands interacted with metropolitan capital to distinctly affect the development of twentieth-century plantations in different places.

Ayala's broader perspective reveals the advantages U.S. investments experienced due to colonial intervention, benefits which are not so obvious when one studies only individual mills. For example, Dye explains that older and more inefficient Cuban mills were more likely to go under during times of recession as a strictly market driven process. Ayala's approach allows him to carefully reconstruct the advantages metropolitan capital enjoyed, especially given U.S. mills' vertical integration with sugar refiners on the mainland. Often, drops in the price of raw sugar, disastrous for Cuban producers, could benefit large U.S. firms, which not only produced raw sugar in the islands, but also made profits at the refining stage, where lower raw sugar prices decreased costs. By not examining the sugar industry and U.S. imperialism only at the level of individual state or colony, but instead including the metropole and all of the Spanish Caribbean, Ayala establishes the complex working of U.S. corporate power and the colonial project. After all, twentieth-century corporate business did not limit itself to individual states, and therefore neither should scholars who study them.

Ayala seeks a dialogue with writers in the plantation school, who generally emphasize the continuities over time of the plantation institution and its links to the world market. He argues that the theoretical focus on continuity and the world economy hides the local histories and specific trajectories of areas within the Caribbean. He also proposes that continuity has been overstated and that radical social and economic transformations took place in the islands, as fully capitalist relations of production supplanted precapitalist relations. He argues that this process was driven by new ways of organizing capital (especially the holding company), horizontal integration (the monopoly of refining interests) in the United States, and vertical integration (controlling sugar mills) in the Caribbean. Concerning the islands, he emphasizes the shift to wage labor and increasing proletarianization as a break with the extra-economic labor relations central to the plantation school's model of continuity. However, Ayala may stretch his argument a bit, as the process of proletarianization is almost always accomplished through extra-economic coercion (often with the help of imperial power, as he himself shows).

Ayala's survey covers most aspects of the American Sugar Kingdom: the rise of the Sugar Trust in the United States, Washington's all important and changing tariff policies, the various forms of *colono* organization in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, and the various types of labor, especially migrant labor, each area employed. He convincingly demonstrates how the industry's nineteenth-century past, land and labor distributions, and U.S. colonial policy all helped determine the particular forms sugar plantations adopted in the three different areas under study. Throughout the work, he shows how the sugar industry's rise was not the result of an efficient market response, but was due to power struggles among refiners, the intervention of the metropolitan state, and the division of labor that U.S. tariff policy created – all of which limited the possibilities for a more balanced and equitable process of development. However, one important lacuna is the scant attention paid to ground level developments in the islands and to the agency of the workers and peasants who confronted the mills. A few pages are devoted to unionization in the 1930s, but little to other actions in the previous decades. Similarly, while Ayala carefully excavates the twisting and occulted deal-making and relationships of capitalists in the United States, the reader may wish he paid the same systematic attention to the intricacies of relations between corporate interests and the colonial or neo-colonial states on the islands themselves. For example, Ayala does not discuss the U.S. sponsored railroad laws mentioned above, although they support his broader argument on the role of imperial power. These quibbles aside, Ayala's study is an important overview of the U.S. imperial project in the Caribbean, in both its domestic and insular aspects.

These two books will be of interest to students of sugar and American intervention, especially because of their divergent opinions on the role of imperialism versus economic or technological changes. They should fuel debate, while adding much empirical evidence and suggesting theoretical departures, about the nature of the U.S. empire and the economic and social effects on its collaborators, opponents, and victims in the Caribbean.

REFERENCE

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Towards Decolonisation: Political, Labour and Economic Developments in Jamaica 1938-1945. RICHARD HART. Kingston: Canoe Press, 1999. xxii + 329 pp. (Paper J\$ 1200, US\$ 32.00)

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Richard Hart's most recent book is a meticulously documented text about the struggle for decolonization, union recognition, and the establishment of an indigenous political party in Jamaica during the War years. The text is part memoir and part historical account. As a major participant in the labor and political struggles of the 1930s and 1940s, Hart was both observer and actor in the unfolding drama of the process of decolonization. Falling within a traditional pattern of historical writing, this work does not offer any fresh epistemological insight into the way history is constructed. Hart does, however, situate his study within broad parameters of social class analysis, though not very rigidly.

Towards Decolonization makes the point that the social conditions of the 1930s gave rise to various forms of protest, such as Alfred Mends's *Plain Talk* newspaper, Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association, and the formation of Garvey's People's Political Party (p. 4). Hart argues that these social conditions demanded an organized response, and that this response came in the form of working-class organizations, beginning with the Workers and Tradesmen's Union (p. 8). The labor strikes, rebellions, and riots that characterized the 1930s gave rise to the central contributions of two prominent trade unionists and political leaders, Norman Manley and Alexander Bustamante, of whom much is written in this book. Readers also learn a great deal about the formation of the Peoples' National Party (PNP) and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP).

Hart provides important insights into the character of Bustamante, whose authoritarian character is best gleaned from the way in which he organized the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union. Bustamante believed, says Hart, that he owned the union "in the same way that he had owned his business" (p. 21). Bustamante did not tolerate political rivals. Hart cites a speech he made to the waterfront workers, saying: "The niggers of this country shall rise ... This will be war. We want revolution" (p. 82). On another occasion Bustamante is reported as saying that self-government would mean "brown man rule" (p. 300). The contradiction of Bustamante, a "brown man" himself, using this

language to mobilize support against the white colonial authorities or the "brown" middle class of Jamaica, is testimony to his alignment with, and influence over, the black, the poor, workers, and peasants. Given Bustamante's enormous popularity, Hart and others of the Marxist group, along with leaders of the PNP, supported him despite his obvious flaws. It would have been useful for Hart to adopt a more critical posture toward Bustamante, and Manley for that matter, given the benefit of hindsight. It would also have been useful if Hart had explored further the willingness of the workers and peasants to accept Bustamante's authoritarianism, while simultaneously rejecting the authoritarianism of the colonial authorities and their employers. In 1943 Bustamante established his own party, the Jamaica Labour Party.

Despite the differences between Bustamante and his cousin Norman Manley, the two shared a certain conservatism. Like Bustamante, Manley had reservations about self-government (p. 33), and possessed a marked hostility toward communism, even though the People's National Party, which was established in 1938, had declared itself socialist by 1940. Hart speculates that the declaration of socialism may have had to do with a decision to associate the PNP with the British Labour Party, which had embraced a similar philosophy – a move perhaps calculated to connect the PNP with the Labour Party politically (p. 78).

Hart recalls that, on occasion, the Colonial Office expressed concerns about whether Manley was reasonable to deal with, but that there were members of the PNP, who were unruly and who had in some way captured the party. The PNP was never in danger of being controlled by the left. The observation of the Colonial Office referred to the ideological tensions in the PNP, between the leftist faction and the rightist/centrist tendencies. Governor Arthur Richards also had some concerns about this communist element in the PNP and ordered the detention of Ken Hill, Frank Hill, Richard Hart, and Arthur Henry in 1942 (p. 199). According to Hart, Governor Richards was preoccupied with containing these elements on the left within the trade union movement as well as in the PNP. In addition, Hart expressed concern over Governor Richards's authoritarian intervention in the PNP's internal affairs (p. 206).

Hart has written a very readable book which seeks to fill in the gaps about the major political and industrial events of the late 1930s and 1940s in Jamaica. Although it covers a fairly well known period in Caribbean history, its contribution lies in the richness and insights of the minutes, notes, correspondences, personal reflections, painstaking perusal of the Public Records Office in London, and personal archives of its author. Hart allows us to understand the present political climate more clearly, as a result of his reflection on the lived experiences of the struggles for decolonization in Jamaica.

Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World. JOHN W. PULIS (ed.).
New York: Garland, 1999. xxiv + 224 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.00)

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This collection of essays by historians, literary scholars, cultural anthropologists, and archeologists explores the history of the "black Loyalists" in the Afro-Atlantic world, those African-Americans who fought for Great Britain during the American Revolution. The authors in *Moving On* trace this group of between 80,000 and 100,000 African-Americans as they moved from the United States to other colonies in the British Atlantic empire. The eight essays in this volume look at the experience of black Loyalists on both sides of the Atlantic: their service in the British army during the Revolution, their experience in London after the war, and their settlement in Jamaica each merit one essay, while the establishment of black Loyalist communities in Nova Scotia and in Sierra Leone in the late eighteenth century each merit two essays. Despite the disparate case studies examined, some common themes in black Loyalists' experience emerge from *Moving On*.

One of the clearest threads of analysis in *Moving On* is the difficulty black Loyalists faced as they established new communities along the Atlantic rim after the American Revolution. Although the authors amply demonstrate the tenacity with which black Loyalists created familial, social, and economic networks in British, West African, and Canadian settlements, they illustrate that these efforts did not always result in the creation of viable long-term black communities in these areas. In her essay on black Loyalists in Country Harbour, Nova Scotia, Carole Watterson Troxler argues the black community there diminished through emigration and intermarriage with whites; by 1800 many Afro-Canadians had left Country Harbor, and a number "who remained had descendents who did not maintain their black identity" (p. 52). Similarly, Laird Niven and Stephen A. Davis assert that black Loyalists in Birchtown, Nova Scotia, were slow to receive land they had been promised for their loyalty and that the land they did receive was of poor quality. Economic difficulties and a "general discontentment with their situation" convinced most Afro-Canadians at Birchtown to leave Canada for Sierra Leone in 1792 (p. 60). Wallace Brown and Claude A. Clegg III each argue that British efforts to settle black Loyalists were poorly planned, thoroughly unrealistic, and more than a little tinged with racism toward both the reset-

tled black Loyalists and the West Africans they hoped the Loyalists would "civilize." Describing the hardships and high mortality rate Sierra Leone faced in its early years, they amply illustrate the price resettled African-Americans paid for British incompetence. Brown and Clegg do differ on the meaning of Sierra Leone's early history, however. Brown asserts that the black Loyalists in Freetown were eventually a success whose "economic, religious, and political achievements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were considerable, and disproved white racist theories" (p. 129). Clegg, on the other hand, emphasizes the hostility British officials showed towards black self-rule and the ways in which Sierra Leone's early struggles were used to rationalize later British colonial rule in Africa (p. 152). Overall, the volume's strongest contribution is the richness of the case studies presented; each essay offers a valuable social history portrait of communities "on the move" during the post-Revolutionary war period.

Despite the strengths of many of the essays in *Moving On*, the volume as a whole is something less than the sum of its parts. Although editor Pulis's brief introduction offers summaries of each essay, it does too little to elucidate common themes among these essays or place the black Loyalist communities within a larger context. This reader was unclear after reading *Moving On* if Pulis or the other authors think there is a common black Loyalist history or how that history might change prevailing interpretations of eighteenth-century Afro-Atlantic history more generally. Moreover, neither the editor nor any of the authors interrogate the designation "black Loyalist" itself. Were those African-Americans who joined British forces during 1776-81 motivated by an ideological attachment to Great Britain, as the term "Loyalist" suggests, or by a rejection of slavery as practiced in the new United States? These essays make the notion that Loyalism was an expression of pro-British (as opposed to anti-U.S.) sentiment unproven at best, dubious at worst. Brown, for example, emphasizes the black Loyalists' "Americanism" and implicit support for the ideals of the American Revolution, rendering the term "Loyalist" meaningless (pp. 117-18). And from an editorial standpoint, the inclusion of Nemeta Blyden's essay – which deals not with "black Loyalists," but with the American Colonization Society – further confuses the issue. Nor do these authors, with the exception of Troxler, treat race as a fluid or social construct; the category "black" is treated as a given. I raise these issues not as postmodern carping but because the black Loyalist communities described here were established at a moment when categories of race, nation, and citizenship were being redefined through migration and revolution. It is disappointing that *Moving On* does not do more to place its case studies within these larger cultural and political transformations. Hopefully future scholars can build upon its many strengths to explore the place of the black Loyalists in the changing eighteenth-century Afro-Atlantic more fully.

Bechu: "Bound Coolie" Radical in British Guiana 1894-1901. CLEM SEECHARAN. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 1999. x + 315 pp. (Paper J\$ 950)

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When I was doing research on Asian indentured labor in Suriname, I was always envious of colleagues who focused on British Guiana. They had access to such wonderful sources as the papers of the Des Voeux Commission which in 1870-71 investigated the conditions of the Asian immigrants, or the West India Royal Commission (the Norman Commission) that did the same some twenty-five years later. Suriname never held official inquiries that included testimonies by the Asians themselves. Clem Seecharan now has written a useful documentary history of Bechu, the first Indian to testify before the Royal Commission in 1897.

Now who was this Bechu? He was, in Seecharan's words, "an indefatigable gadfly," who in letters to the local press revealed the conditions of Indian indentureship: poor wages, sexual exploitation of women by overseers and managers, and the virtual impossibility for Indians to obtain justice because of the collusion between colonial authorities and the planters. This knowledge we owe to economic historian Alan Adamson who "discovered" Bechu in the 1960s. Yet the man himself remained somewhat of a mystery, something Bechu himself seems to have cultivated. Seecharan has now filled a number of lacunae in our understanding with this two-part volume. The first section focuses on Bechu and the British Guianese environment in the late nineteenth century, while the second part includes letters and memoranda by Bechu (and reactions to them by local opponents).

Bechu claimed to be a *kurmi* (a member of the agricultural caste) from Calcutta who was orphaned at an early age. He received no formal education but was schooled by "a white missionary lady." In 1894 the 34-year-old Bechu enlisted for Trinidad but was shipped instead to British Guiana and indentured to plantation Enmore in East Demerara from December 1894 to February 1897. Yet on arrival Bechu was found physically unfit for manual labor and made an assistant driver; later, he became a domestic servant, which gave him the chance to read newspapers and books.

Seecharan emphasizes that Bechu was not a Hindu, despite his caste claim, and that his life was embedded in Christian principles. He argues that

Bechu's Christian background "probably enabled him to be a better Indian in the modern India of the late nineteenth century. He was a product of the British-Indian intellectual encounter, which was most advanced in Calcutta" (p. 19). (I'm not sure whether I understand this statement correctly; does Christianity make "better Indians"? It might be true, however, that Bechu's Christianity and references to the Bible made his arguments more easily digestible for the colonial authorities and planters.)

In the first two years of his indentureship Bechu seems to have been anonymous; his first letter to the press was a critical account in the wake of the shooting of five Indian workers at plantation Non Pareil on October 13, 1896. He concluded that the root of the troubles was an arbitrary increase in tasks which precluded many indentureds from earning the statutory minimum wage. Later Bechu asserted in his memorandum on Non Pareil to the Norman Commission that "it is an open secret that coolie women are in the keeping of overseers" (p. 37). Needless to say, the powers that be were not pleased with Bechu's letters and used their racial prejudices to dismiss his writings; Indians were known not to speak the truth.

This didn't stop Bechu. Continuing articulation of his opposition to Indian indentureship led to a debate on bonded labor (or, in the words of the planters, "reliable, resident labor") and the state of the sugar industry. Bechu exposed anyone he considered to be infringing on the rights of indentureds. In a scathing indictment he concluded that it was useless for contract laborers to seek the assistance of the Protector of Immigrants, "for such officials are virtually the protectors of the planters" (p. 69). Given Bechu's persistent criticism, it was not surprising that he was taken to court. A protracted libel case against him led to charges being dropped after two inconclusive trials in 1899. The biography of Bechu stops abruptly when he leaves British Guiana around February 1901; Seecharan was unable to ascertain what became of this "coolie" radical afterward.

In the second part of this volume, Bechu's writings and reactions to his criticisms are reprinted in six thematic chapters. The first focuses on his letters immediately following the Non Pareil tragedy, while the second is devoted to the Norman Commission. The subsequent chapters include personal attacks on Bechu, his condemnation of the plantocracy, and his praise for the work of the Salvation Army in helping derelict Indians in Georgetown.

A number of recent publications on Indians in the British Caribbean have created a solid body of scholarship in this previously neglected field and the pieces of the puzzle are falling into place, not least thanks to such valuable pieces as *Bechu*.

Het Afakaschrift van de Tapanahoni Rivier in Suriname. C.N. DUBELAAR & ANDRÉ R.M. PAKOSIE. Utrecht: Thela Thesis, 1999. 183 pp. (Paper NLG 37.50)

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In 1910, or one or two years earlier, Afaka Atumisi, a Ndyuka Maroon of eastern Suriname, dreamed that he was visited by a spirit that looked like a white person and bore the name of *Un Sabi* ("we/you know"), abbreviated to Usa. Usa told Afaka that it was time for him to teach the Ndyuka how to write. There was no need to adopt the European way of writing; a syllabic script would do just as well. The spirit promised to teach him one or two signs each night when he visited him. And so it happened. Afaka learned 56 syllabic signs from his spiritual adviser, each consisting of a vowel or a consonant followed by a vowel. In 1910, struck by the appearance of Halley's comet, Afaka felt convinced that he had been given an important tool for the improvement of the fate of Maroons. He started teaching Usa's signs to the Ndyuka.

Afaka's most enthusiastic pupil was his brother-in-law Abena. In 1915, when Abena was admitted to a dispensary run by Catholic friars, the world first learned about this extraordinary script. Most of Abena's work during those days consisted of transliterating Catholic prayers from Latin to the new syllabic script. The friars also alerted Father Morssink, an enterprising Catholic priest who had taken it upon himself to bring the true faith to Suriname's Maroons. Morssink believed that his missionary work would be significantly helped if the Afaka script were to be adopted by the Ndyuka Maroons, the great majority of whom were illiterate.

An opportunity soon presented itself. In 1917, Afaka, who was gravely ill (probably from cancer), was persuaded to check into the Roman Catholic mission hospital in Paramaribo. It was here that he wrote the better part of *Patili Molosi buku* ("Father Morssink's book"), the most extensive text written in the new syllabic script. Afaka also promised Morssink to travel to the Tapanahoni River to try to persuade Ndyuka Paramount Chief Amakiti of the usefulness of the new script. In 1918, when he was on his long journey, Afaka died near his village on the Tapanahoni and was buried there. A number of *bukuman*, initiates of the Afaka script, continued his work and produced a variety of texts, but none as elaborate as "Father Morssink's book."

The volume under review here consists of four main texts in the Afaka script and a few brief notes. First, Father Morssink's book, the *pièce de*

résistance, which contains reflections on the true monotheistic religion (the Catholic faith) and on the history of the Maroons. Afaka mentions the urgent need of the Ndyuka people for education, and his despair at people ridiculing him. A second collection of texts, known as the *Kabiten Alufaisi buku* consists of some prayers, proverbs, and an enumeration of the food and drink consumed at the death of a famous Ndyuka elder. The authorship of these texts is not always clear: they could have been written by Afaka, Abena, or Abena's son, Alufaisi. More interesting is the third collection (*Kago buku*), writings in the Afaka script by headman Kago, dating from the 1920s (and published in vol. 67 of this journal in 1993). Kago offers a roll count of the more important ancestors of most of the Tapanahoni villages, and throws in a small but valuable dose of oral history. The last main collection, known as the *Clemens Kanape buku*, consists of Catholic prayers, hymns, liturgical declarations such as the Act of Faith, and a catechism. We are also offered some oral history and directions on how to prepare certain herbal baths.

The reception of Afaka's teachings and script was hostile from the beginning. With very few exceptions, his family refused to support him. In 1918, the Paramount Chief summarily dismissed him as that *wisiwasi nenge* (wishy-washy black) – nothing to be amazed at, coming from a functionary closely allied to the Afro-Surinamese Gaan Gadu cult which had always fought the Christian mission churches. The Chief and the people rightly suspected that the *bukuman* were instruments in the hands of the Roman Catholic Church in its attempt to convert the Ndyuka. There probably never were many more than a dozen *bukuman*. During the course of their investigation, Dubelaar and Pakosie succeeded in locating fifteen *bukuman*. From my own research between 1961 and 1991, I gained the impression that some of them only very rarely used Afaka's script.

Gazon Matodja: Surinaams stamhoofd aan het einde van een tijdperk. ANDRÉ R.M. PAKOSIE. Utrecht: Stichting Sabanapeti, 1999. 172 pp. (Paper NLG 35.00)

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The book under review here is a life history of Gazon Matodja, Paramount Chief of the Ndyuka Maroons of eastern Suriname. But it is also, first and

foremost, a history of the Ndyuka people, from the beginnings in the early eighteenth century, through their peace treaty with the Dutch colonial authorities in 1760, and up to the present day. The author is one of the highest spiritual authorities of the Ndyuka, and a good historian as well. A specific episode, well known to all Ndyuka historians, will serve to illustrate his approach to oral history. Speaking here is a historian of the Otoo clan; the "Twelve" that the historian refers to is a metonym for the Ndyuka.¹

When my ancestors succeeded in escaping from the white man's whip, they were determined that that would never happen again. They left the coastal plantation area, and withdrew deep into the forest. They were afraid; they had never been so far into the forest before; they were looking for a place where human beings could live. The Twelve decided that they would share responsibility. On Monday one nation would take the lead, on Tuesday another. One day, when the Otoo nation consulted its obeah, they learned that the Maroons would reach a great inland river the next day, the river we now call Tapanahoni. There they could settle in safety. But there was a problem. The responsibility for the next day's journey would be for the Nyanfai nation. My Otoo ancestors didn't like that. It had been agreed that the nation that first hit upon the great river would secure the paramount chieftainship for their group. All Twelve had agreed upon this. But my ancestors were clever. They told the Nyanfai elders that they had seen how their people had exhausted themselves. My Otoo ancestors assured them that they were willing to take an extra turn. The Nyanfai nation accepted this offer. That is how the Otoo won the paramount chieftainship.

This account of the Ndyuka people's exodus is an intrinsic part of their historical repertoire. Pakosie's book builds upon his substantial knowledge of oral testimony, but he uses data such as these critically. Regarding this event, for example, he mentions two important points that undermine the Ndyuka account. First, his ancestors had settled along creeks in a region about twenty miles north of the Tapanahoni decades before they decided to build their permanent villages along that river. Secondly, the Ndyuka did not travel in one large group to the remote interior. There must have been at least two major influxes, as well as numerous smaller ones beginning early in the eighteenth century and continuing well after the 1760 peace treaty.

A great advantage of having Pakosie's historical narrative is that now, for the first time, we have a credible account of what happened in the first half of the nineteenth century. After 1793, when colonial mercenaries and Ndyuka allies had defeated the guerrilla chieftain Boni, the Dutch began to lose interest in what was happening in the far away Tapanahoni villages. They withdrew their representatives and spies. With the exception of a couple of reports by travelers and government agents, there is nothing on the Tapanahoni

1. For the sake of convenience, I use a concise recounting taken from my own field notes rather than the more elaborate version that Pakosie offers.

Ndyuka for the period between 1800 and 1865. Fortunately, Pakosie, a native historian, could bridge the gap in our knowledge about the period between the time when the Dutch espionage efforts offer us a flawed yet valuable record of historical events in the formative years of Ndyuka society and 1865. When I worked with Ndyuka historians I found it possible to reconstruct what happened in Ndyuka society in the second half of the nineteenth century. For that period, my account and that of Pakosie support one another, although the Ndyuka historians we consulted were usually different persons.

The other subject of this interesting monograph is Chief Gazon, a man of great wisdom and integrity who had the bad fortune to experience three major crises. The first one occurred almost immediately after the death of his predecessor, Akontu Velanti. In 1965, Creole politicians, among them the Prime Minister Jopie Pengel, decided that the installation of Gazon by them would be a clever political ploy to win the interior for their party. Gazon, however, refused to cooperate, even after Pengel arrived in his village with an impressive retinue. For religious and personal reasons Gazon was determined to wait until the mourning rites for Akontu had been fully completed. To his dismay, not only did he have to cope with the pressure of city politicians, but he also felt betrayed by a majority of Ndyuka elders. Here Pakosie underestimates the degree of collaboration of Ndyuka notables with the Creole politicians of Paramaribo. For a number of days Gazon was a man persecuted in his own village. To escape confrontation with his enemies, he hid and slept in different houses. But he never gave in. When a delegation of Gaan Gadu priests arrived, Gazon's moral stance finally found the backing it needed.² Pengel had to leave Ndyuka territory as the loser.

In 1972, a religious reform movement under the leadership of its prophet Akalali managed, within a few months, to put an end to Gaan Gadu oracles, and the high priest withdrew to his forest camp with a handful of followers. Gazon, who was associated with the Gaan Gadu religion, did not object to the correction of several practices that were widely felt to be abuses. But he did balk when an overconfident Akalali started to desecrate places that had been sacred to the Ndyuka people, and to claim the paramount chieftainship for himself. When Gazon tried to introduce some degree of moderation to Akalali's activities, he was almost isolated in the tribal councils. Bringing his case to the authorities in Paramaribo didn't help either; the city had placed its bets on Akalali. Various political parties supported Akalali with money and gifts. Gazon's sole support, he said on one occasion, were the priests of the Gedeonsu cult who had always worked in close cooperation with those of

2 Gaan Gadu ("Great Deity") is the major Afro-Surinamese religion in this part of the country.

Gaan Gadu. In 1979, after several difficult years, Gazon finally saw Akalali leave the Tapanahoni River.

Then in 1986, civil war broke out, pitting hundreds of poorly armed Sarakaka and Ndyuka Maroons against the modern army of military dictator Desi Delano Bouterse. Right from the beginning, the guerrillas started shopping for religious support. Many medicine men assisted them in their armed struggle with their knowledge of obeah. The commanders of the guerrilla army also begged Gazon to assist them with whatever spiritual or material powers he could muster. Despite the fact that Gazon was no admirer of the military, he refused to make a pronouncement in favor of the insurgents. "As Chief, I cannot send my people to kill other human beings," was his main line of defense. Needless to say, this attitude antagonized the guerrillas, but didn't go far enough for those Ndyuka who thought it more profitable to cooperate with the military.

In addition to these three major crises, Gazon had to cope with many other serious problems. Pakosie is to be complimented for offering us this biography of an extraordinary man. That he also presented a sophisticated history of the Ndyuka people is even more reason to applaud his effort.

Urban Jamaican Creole: Variation in the Mesolect. PETER L. PATRICK. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1999. xx + 331 pp. (Cloth US\$ 110.00)

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Peter Patrick states his major objective on the first page of his introductory chapter: "to elucidate the nature of a mesolectal grammar." This is indeed a much needed task, considering that most studies of creoles have focused on the most "conservative" or "radical" varieties (basilects), with the implicit assumption that such vernaculars are the most revealing.

One can argue on the contrary that mesolects and acrolects offer particularly interesting insights into the developmental processes affecting variable continua. Patrick's *Urban Jamaican Creole* is a strong contribution to investigations of the nature of the creole continuum from a sociolinguistic perspective, at least in terms of a few well-chosen linguistic variables (- KYA - the post velar palatal glide, T/D consonant cluster simplification, and past

marking – both preverbal and inflectional). This book is interesting in two major respects: first, it provides a well-documented model of empirical field research that will be extremely helpful to scholars and graduate (and undergraduate) students involved in data collection. Second, it presents a readable overview of socially diagnostic linguistic variables found in many nonstandard (as well as standard/casual) varieties of English. Patrick's analysis of Kingston mesolects is presented as a test of the unidimensionality hypothesis in the creole continuum – that is to say, the claim that linguistic features vary along a single dimension.

Patrick devotes two chapters (2 and 3) to the outline of his methodological procedures in the investigation of an urban sector of Kingston (dubbed "Vee-ton"). This thoroughness in accounting for the corpus is atypical because creole descriptions are often based on undefined speakers or scant data that are likely to represent only a partial view of speakers' repertoires. The geographical area and population selected for analysis are well documented with appropriate demographic data, and definitions of speakers' social positions (Patrick is careful to differentiate between "class" and "status") in terms of education, income, and residence. Such quantifiable objective information enables him to come up with a rank score for each of his fifteen respondents. However, as Patrick himself admits, many other variables are likely to affect individual status and power in a complex creole community. Factors such as verbal ability, or appearance may carry more ingroup prestige than education or financial status, and various ranking scales may apply to the same individual depending on whom s/he interacts with (the typical "covert vs. overt prestige" dichotomy found in most societies including speakers of nonstandard varieties). The challenges presented by the analysis of a creole community are clearly represented in the fact that only three speakers out of fifteen (the most acrolectal = Roxy and Rose, and the most basilectal = Dinah) show a clear correlation of their linguistic behavior and their overall status ranking (Table 8.2, p. 288). Patrick provides a wide array of maps and charts, but only a few isolated sentences illustrating the corpus. Sample texts would have nicely combined with the ethnographic data provided on speakers.

Chapters 4-7 represent the distribution of the four linguistic variables selected for analysis. The KYA variable – presence of palatal glides after velars and before low vowels (e.g., *car* = [kya]) – shows sharp stratification, but only in the case of AR words, and is therefore a socially diagnostic feature, which is closely linked to age (younger people appear to reduce palatal use in most contexts). This "phonolexical" feature does not exhibit the fine stratification typically associated with phonological features – as is the case in the simplification of T/D clusters.

Regarding past marking, the use of the preverbal past morpheme *did* /*neva* displays sharp stratification, whereas verb inflection features fine stratification corresponding to the patterns of T/D cluster simplification. Overall, those

variables are distributed across the population in a manner that justifies the heuristic use of the continuum model.

Patrick places his findings in the context of the debate on the nature of the mesolect, with the particular intent to test the unidimensionality hypothesis. According to him, the urban mesolect is a coherent system, although a mixed one, which would exclude the polylectal model – a single system spanning the entire acrolect to basilect continuum. Patrick adduces the argument that “mesolectal speakers do not have – or do not use – a full basilectal competence, and have not acquired full (English) competence” (p. 293). I find this interpretation open to debate. First, just because Veeton speakers do not use basilects *in the collected corpus* (although they *do* use some basilectal forms) does not necessarily mean that they do not have full basilectal competence. It is a well-known fact that native speakers of stigmatized varieties code switch extensively, and reserve full vernaculars for ingroup usage. Secondly, the fact that Kingston varieties are “mixed” (for example, use of preverbal morphemes as well as inflections for past marking) suggests the influence of both basilects and English (that all Jamaicans are exposed to). The difference between the “co-existent (interactive) systems” hypothesis and the “single (mixed) system” hypothesis is academic. In either case it is clear that the creole continuum is empirically motivated, and the mesolect may be coherent, but it is not an independent system since it derives from other systems. Patrick has faced complicated issues and taken us a step closer to a full understanding of creole variability.

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